

THE AMERICAN NEPTUNE

MARITIME HISTORY & ARTS



VIEW OF ISLAND OF WAAHOO IN THE PACIFIC, VISITED BY CE. BENSELL IN 1821.

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THE AMERICAN NEPTUNE

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF MARITIME HISTORY AND ARTS

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ON THE COVER

*View of the Island of Woahoo, in the Pacific, as Visited
by C. E. Bensell in 1821*
Watercolor on Paper, 10½" x 14¾"
Artist Unknown

Peabody Essex Museum Collection
Gift of Charles H. Taylor

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF'S NOTE

The steam era continues to fascinate many devotees of maritime history, and it is pleasing to see that some museums and historical societies, as well as individuals and corporations, are keeping certain vessels in operation, against overwhelming, expensive odds. One such group is the Muskoka Steamship and Historical Society, which owns RMS *Segwun*. The last fully operational coal-fired steamboat of a fleet of some 140 vessels in Muskoka's lakes in Ontario, *Segwun* escaped the fate of sister ships by a massive restoration project. She is a premier tourist attraction, and as of the year 2000 will proudly claim to have sailed three centuries.

Operating out of Gravenhurst, Ontario, she carries nearly 40,000 passengers in a 135-day sailing season. Now in danger of being put out of work by her own popularity, the Society has decided to construct a modern version of a traditional Muskoka steamship to operate along with the *Segwun*. She is to be called *Wenonah*, after the first steamboat built by the Muskoka Navigation Company in 1866. *Wenonah* means "first born daughter" in Ojibwa. She will have a diesel engine which will run "whisper quiet," important in trying to replicate steam travel's silence. At the dock in Gravenhurst Bay, an interpretive center, built as a replica of the Muskoka Wharf rail terminus, tells the larger story. The ghosts of Ontario steam navigation are coming to life! Following in the footsteps of Mystic, Connecticut, the Society hopes to establish the Muskoka Boathouse School of Antique Boat Construction. As days advance, so are we losing the skills of these earlier eras of ship construction. So hats off, too, for this Society's enthusiastic support for vessels and boatbuilding. For more details, phone (705) 687 6667.

In this issue we publish a variety of articles on traditional and new themes. Rhys Richards leads off with a discussion of Hawaii's whaling activities in relation to what in the early nineteenth century was called the Japan whaling grounds. R. Blake Dunnavent follows with his insightful study of riverine warfare during the War of 1812. Walter Staples recounts his Arctic experiences with scientist-explorer Donald B. Macmillan. Art Ungerleider provides an account of the training ship *Marsala*, her trials and tribulations. These articles recount American experiences in many different seas.

In addition we print our usual fine collection of book reviews, short notices, and communications. In response to an

earlier appeal we now have a sizeable supply of excellent manuscripts under consideration or awaiting publication. Maritime history and its allied arts continue to be an attractive field for publication and teaching, and *The American Neptune* remains committed to putting into print the very best available. Encourage your friends and asso-

ciates to take an interest in what we do, for we are reliant on a paying public to support our subscription list.

BARRY M. GOUGH
Wilfrid Laurier University
Waterloo, Ontario

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The Peabody Essex Museum gratefully acknowledges the contribution of a grant from Wilfrid Laurier University to assist the Editor-In-Chief in the management and production of this journal.

HONOLULU AND WHALING ON THE JAPAN GROUNDS

RHYS RICHARDS

Over half the world is water. One hemisphere contains the Pacific, Indian, and the Great Southern oceans, but scarcely any land except Antarctica, Australia, and New Zealand. If the focus is reduced to one third of the whole globe, then the Pacific trisphere contains hardly any land at all except widely scattered islands, most of which are tiny specks grossly exaggerated on our maps by the disproportionate space needed to show their names. For most people the scale of so much ocean is almost beyond comprehension, but not so for the sail whalers of the last century. As they explored all of the Pacific minutely and routinely as part of their normal day-to-day work, their views were essentially global. To understand

Rhys Richards, a former New Zealand diplomat, has written over a dozen books and fifty articles, mostly on whaling and sailing. He retired promptly at sixty this year in order to write more Pacific maritime history and on Pacific arts and artifacts.

His long-term address is 73 Seaview Road, Paremata, Wellington, New Zealand.

This article began in parallel with the compilation of a List of all Shipping Arrivals and Departures (SAD) at Honolulu from 1820 to 1840. Periods were spent in residence in 1994 at the Lahaina Restoration Foundation and in 1997 at the Kendall Whaling Museum in Sharon, Massachusetts, with stimulating help from James Luckie and Barbara Sharp; and with Stuart Frank, Michael Dyer and Mary Malloy respectively. This text is a revision of a talk given at the Kendall Museum on 6 September 1997. Ms. Ann Witty and Mrs. Jean McKinney kindly reported in detail on the logbook of the *Syren* of London at the Columbia River Maritime Museum, Astoria. Among various researchers and librarians who helped generously in the UK, USA, New Zealand and Australia and elsewhere, the work of Mr. A. G. E. Jones, Honore Forster, and Jocelyn and John Chisholm, of Eastbourne, New Zealand are greatly appreciated.

the scale of their expansion, their industry and their success, it is vital to think globally, too. Such a global perspective is an essential prerequisite for reviewing how from 1820 to 1840, these sail whalers developed the huge expanse of the North Pacific whaling grounds that they called somewhat ambiguously "the Japan Grounds."

Their expansion began by using the Hawaiian Islands as a mid-Pacific provisioning base. Earth scientists call the Hawaiian group the most isolated islands on the earth. The scale of this isolation is hard to grasp. To the east of Hawaii, the whole of the continental United States except Alaska would fit comfortably into the seas between Panama and Hawaii. To the northwest, the whole of the continental USA including Alaska would fit comfortably into the oceans between Hawaii and Japan, and would obscure no inhabited islands. The sail whalers of the last century found that in a tract of ocean so vast and so empty of land, there were no markers by which to identify localities and separate places. Consequently, across that huge spread of ocean, there were no names or words that the whalers could use to indicate to laymen, to relatives, and to the folks back home, exactly where they were, or where they had been. Thus grew up general terms like "towards Japan," "on the Japan grounds," "at Japan," "on the coast of Japan," or "off Japan." These names may sound specific, but they were used loosely to mean little more than "somewhere," or indeed anywhere, in the vast unbroken expanse of sea between Hawaii and Japan.

The Japan whaling grounds were so large that they were hard to define, and today the names can be confusing. We know from historical records what the whalers had to learn by hard searching, and by trial and error. Much the biggest sector of what was called the Japan grounds stretched from well northwest of the Hawaiian chain towards Japan. In that vast expanse of

ocean, the only island there was called Midway, appearing to be halfway to the Japan whaling grounds, rather than halfway to Japan itself. The second fishery was well south of Tokyo, among the Bonin and Volcano Islands and north from Iwo Jima. The third ground, known as "the Coast of Japan," did not mean just those seas a day or so by sail from the sight of land, but a much broader expanse.

The informative chart that Charles Townsend made in 1935 of actual whale captures recorded in the old logbooks and journals shows that the true "Coast of Japan grounds" was a very dense, compact area just east of Tokyo, but earlier that term was used quite loosely for the general area northwest of Hawaii and Midway Island with an area much the same size as the continental United States.¹ Townsend's chart also shows that all three grounds were highly seasonal, with most whales taken in June and July. For the rest of the year wise whaling masters were free to cruise elsewhere. They did so with vigor and enthusiasm; by 1830 they had cruised everywhere in the Pacific so thoroughly that even the tiniest specks of land had all been discovered.

It is not at all clear who was the first whaleman to discover the Japan whaling grounds. There are two main contenders for the honor: One was an American master of an American whaleship, and the other a Nantucket captain employed by British whaling merchants in London. These dual claims arose from the different global expansions of two whale fleets. Almost all the American captains, and some British captains too, set out south around Cape Horn, then north along the coasts of Chile and Peru to the "on-shore grounds." After the War of 1812 they spread further westward and by 1818 had begun frequenting the "off shore grounds" around the Galapagos Islands and further west. The first American whaleships arrived at Hawaii in 1819 and cruised onwards northwest towards the Japan Grounds.²

Most British whaleships had taken a different route, around the Cape of Good Hope into the Indian Ocean, then either to Timor and Indonesian waters or south around Australia and through

the Tasman Sea to central Polynesia. When these London whalers began pressing further north from Timor to the Celebes and beyond, they reached the Japan Grounds in 1819. Thus, British and American whaleships had gone halfway around the world in different directions before they met and mingled on the Japan Grounds.

In both cases, these whalers had been preceded in southeast Asian waters by several earlier waves of traders who gave them some relevant information. A previously unknown early voyage from east of Japan towards North America, which has so far defied further identification, was that of Captain James Cage in 1806. He kept a journal which was still extant in 1820, but is now lost. The earliest known whaling captain to cruise near Japan, in 1820, carried with him the following extract written by Captain Cage in 1806:

July 14. Latitude 34.52 N, Longd 158.22 East. Saw sperm whales repeatedly until I passed the North and [of] Longd 172.07 East. Good weather and a plenty of whales all along the way 120 miles of Latd. and 600 miles on Longd. Saw also sperm whales Latd 32.20 North and Longd 163.00 West, and blackfish and porpoises in great numbers.³

This is a good description of the grounds, but was Captain Cage really the discoverer?

Another claimant for the honor of discovering the Japan Grounds was Commander John Cawley, RN, who had been at Oahu with Vancouver and Hergest in 1792, and explored off Japan with Broughton in 1797. In 1834 Cawley wrote that it was he who first promoted the Japan Grounds for British whaleships:

In 1819, on hearing of the great depression in the sperm whale fishery, I made enquiry and found that the range of cruising [by British whaleships] in the Pacific Ocean extended but a few degrees to the north of the Line. Having observed while surveying the islands of Japan in the *Providence* in 1797 a vast number of sperm whales.... I gave information to the principal merchants in London who im-



Where the Whales Were Actually Taken: C. H. Townsend's Plotting of Recorded Whale Captures on the "Japan Grounds."

mediately acted upon it, and a great quantity of sperm whales have been taken in those parts, which still continue the principal rendezvous to the great extension of that [whale] fishery.⁴

Thomas Beale, whaling off the Bonin Islands in October 1831, wrote that the first British whaleship to cruise on the coast of Japan was the *Syren*, a big 500-ton vessel that the Enderby family sent out on an experimental voyage under Captain Frederick Coffin. Beale reported that the *Syren* had encountered an immense number of sperm whales while off the coast of Japan in April 1820, and had returned home in April 1822 with a record cargo of 346 tuns, or 2,768 barrels.⁵

On this voyage from 1820 to 1822, Captain Coffin kept a daily journal. Inside its back cover,

written presumably before the voyage began, is the exciting commercial intelligence noted above which Captain Cage had written in 1806. Although a whaling pioneer, Captain Coffin had had from an earlier trader some prior indication of the likely value of visiting the waters south and east of Japan. However, a close following of the daily journal entries reveals the route of the *Syren* and shows that almost all of her cruising time was spent in seas well to the south near the Moluccas. Indeed, during a voyage of thirty-two months, the *Syren* was on the coast of Japan grounds only twice: the period from 10 April to 12 July 1820 was spent cruising between the Bonin Islands and Japan, taking twenty-seven whales, several of which were large, with two yielding seventy-two and eighty barrels. The weather was much too rough for the *Syren* to remain there long. During

these twelve weeks, the journal mentions land only twice: "9 April 1820. Saw land not on the charts. Called it Syren Island." "19 April. Fatsisio in sight." Both of these are in positions due south of Tokyo, much closer to Japan than to the Bonin Islands. This use of a local name, Fatsisio, indicates that Captain Frederick Coffin also had on board a relatively sophisticated, although incomplete, chart.

The *Syren* made her second cruise between the Bonin Islands and Japan in four weeks of very rough weather from 1 May to 1 June 1821. She took twenty-eight small whales, making about five hundred barrels, or almost twenty percent of her final cargo, but the journal keeper did not mention seeing or visiting any land or any other ships. The *Syren* then spent July and August near the Moluccas, and left for home in September. When she reached London in April 1822 she had not only a big cargo of 2,768 barrels of sperm oil, but also the electrifying news that during a cruise of thirty-two months, over one thousand barrels had been taken in a mere sixteen weeks cruising on the new grounds south of Japan. Beale, a contemporary commentator, said that this huge cargo "astonished and stimulated the exertion of all those involved in the whaling trade throughout Europe and America."⁶

Meanwhile, American whalers were expanding their grounds around Cape Horn into the Pacific, then north to Chile and Peru and on to California. In about 1818 Jonathan Winship, the veteran Boston sea otter and China trader, wrote to his friends on Nantucket, assuring them that on an earlier voyage to and from China, he had seen "large numbers of Sperm Whales" on the "Coast of Japan." The first two American whaleships to examine the new grounds were the *Balaena* of Nantucket and the *Equator* of New Bedford, which visited Hawaii, Maui, and Honolulu in September and October 1819.⁷

Soon after, also in 1819, the Nantucket ship *Maro* was dispatched under Captain Joseph Allen with instructions to sail west-northwest from the Hawaiian (Sandwich) Islands. Allen wrote home that on 2 June 1820 he had discovered and named a reef and an island, which are now known as

"Gardner's Pinnacles." Continuing further northwest, "we got on Japan the latter part of June — had thick hazy weather for about three weeks, but by 2 July [1820] we had 250 barrels. We took most of our oil from latitude 36 degrees North and longitude 168 degrees East to 170 degrees West. We saw no ships but plenty of whales.... Left the coast 17 September for the Sandwich Islands.... The chance is good to fill the ship in another season on Japan." In only three months on the new ground, they had taken no less than eleven hundred barrels of sperm oil. When the *Maro* reached Nantucket in March 1822 she carried an enormous, unprecedented cargo of 2,425 barrels of sperm oil.⁸

The speed with which the American whale fleet flocked to the new "Japan grounds," which were actually much closer to Honolulu than to Tokyo, was simply phenomenal. It was a real bonanza-style gold rush. Even before the *Maro* had reached home, several American whaleships were diverted to sail for "the coast of Japan." Six or seven more followed in 1821. That year the ship *Washington* of Nantucket, Captain Swain, was reported as if she had "visited the coast of Japan and obtained 1,000 barrels," along with an unnamed New Bedford whaleship and the London whaleship *L'Aigle* under Captain Valentine Starbuck.⁹

Starbuck estimated that in 1822, more than thirty American whaleships cruised on what he called "the coast of Japan." His estimate was much too low, for a close examination of six contemporary logbooks has revealed at least sixty-one American whaleships, plus nine British whaleships, cruising on the new grounds in that 1822 season. The logbook of the *Maryland* of New Bedford records she spoke twenty-nine whaleships there in the six months from May to October 1822. The logbooks of the *Palladium* of Boston and the *Alexander* of Nantucket show that while they cruised northwest from Hawaii and back, they spoke twenty-seven and thirty-four whaleships respectively. The logbook of the *Dawn* of New York records only eighteen such meetings, and the logbooks of the *Balaena* of New Bedford and the *Coquette* of London only nine and five such meetings respectively.¹⁰ Even when double counting is excluded, they add up to

the huge total of seventy whaleships cruising in a mid-ocean bonanza in what was virtually the new grounds' pioneer season.

Despite repeated page after page headed "On the Coast of Japan," not one of the six vessels for which there are logbooks for that pioneer season got within one thousand miles of the coast of Japan. Even with twelve hour watches from the masthead, no American whalers actually saw Japan in 1822, nor, as far as can be established, did any of the subsequent whalers in 1823 or 1824. Indeed, it is still far from clear who was the first American whaler to sight Japan. It now seems unlikely to have been Captain Joseph Allen in the *Maro* despite his mention of "leaving the coast, for the Sandwich Islands, in September 1820."¹¹

The first sighting of Japan by American whalers may be revealed in the following account. During 1825, while cruising nearly two thousand miles east of Japan, the *Aurora* of Nantucket, Captain Seth Coffin, rescued nine survivors and three dead men from the wreck of a Japanese junk. "In running in to Jeddo to land them, two sperm whales were taken, and the Japanese eagerly devoured the blubber and lean with a bountiful supply of vinegar.... The people were put on board a fishing schooner off the harbour of Jeddo, and the *Aurora* continued her voyage."

Other sources show that the *Aurora* had left Honolulu in April 1824 with only one hundred barrels of oil, but returned in November with 1,050 barrels. She visited again in April 1825 and returned in October 1825 with seventeen hundred barrels.¹² A pioneer trader at Honolulu, Stephen Reynolds, noted of her last arrival, "Oct. 13. Ship *Aurora*, Coffin, 1700 barrels of oil, came in. During her cruise at Lat 33 N. Long 162 East, fell in with a Japanese junk with 12 people. Took them out, carried them on their coast and put them on board some of their country boats; they took a few articles from her," including 8,004 pounds of wax and over three hundred pounds of copper, which sold well at auction on the beach at Honolulu.¹³

It does not seem that American whaleships spread as far northwest as to cruise in sight of Japan until about 1827, some seven years after

American whalers had begun whaling on what they called the Japan Grounds.

As late as 1826 Captain Osbourne of the *Almira* of Edgartown reported he had met four whaleships "on the coast of Japan in April, May and June 1826."¹⁴ Since the latitude and longitude of each gam was quoted, it can be shown that far from being near the coast of Japan on her cruise to and from Honolulu, the *Almira* was only just over half way to Japan for only two or three weeks. Moreover, the four whaleships she spoke were respectively thirteen hundred, 1,650, three thousand and thirty-two hundred nautical miles east of Tokyo! Put in perspective, these distances are as far by land miles from Boston as Illinois, Nebraska, and Nevada, which is how far away from Japan these captains were when, for want of any more precise geographical markers, they said that they were already "on the Japan grounds," or, as in the case of the *Almira*, "on the coast of Japan." The nearest land was Japan, but they were nowhere near it.

What is striking is that despite the global scale of their whaling, these whalers learned very promptly which were the best seasons when big cargoes could be taken quickly. As early as 1823, on the basis of knowledge shared at Honolulu in April and October that year, the keeper of the logbook on the *Alexander* recorded confidently that "the season in Latitude 37 is from the first of May to the Middle of September." That proved absolutely correct in later years, although sometimes the season extended from April to October.¹⁵

The wealth of the new grounds was proven immediately. The *Alexander*, during a tedious cruise of thirty-two months, took eleven hundred barrels of sperm oil, almost half of her final cargo, in only eight weeks on the new Japan ground, cruising at "Lat. 35 to 37.30 North; Long. 145 to 150 West," with seven hundred barrels of this taken in only twenty-five days.¹⁶ Her logbook records that the *Thames* of London arrived at Honolulu on 8 October 1822 with eighteen hundred barrels. This vessel was then only eighteen months from home, and had previously been reported "At Japan" on 15 July 1822. Evidently,

the *Thames* had taken six hundred barrels in less than three months while en route from somewhere towards Japan to Honolulu. Huge catches in quick time like this held out the prospect of much shorter voyages which would allow profits to increase handsomely.

The *Wilmington and Liverpool Packet*, Captain Briggs, returned home to New Bedford from Japan on 23 November 1823 with twenty-eight hundred barrels (350 tuns). This was said to be the biggest cargo of sperm oil yet taken to the United States by one vessel.¹⁷ She matched that cargo on her next voyage, returning home in March 1827 with twenty-seven hundred barrels taken on a voyage of only twenty-seven months. On her earlier voyage it had taken her forty-two long weary months to get such a big cargo, but on the second voyage, by going directly to the new Japan grounds, she took as much again in little more than half the previous time.

Other early American whaleships returned well laden: the *Persia* of New Bedford in February 1823 "full;" the *Eliza Barker* of New York in June 1823 with 1,550 barrels; and the *Barclay* of New Bedford in April 1824 with sixteen hundred barrels.¹⁸ No doubt there were other voyages that were similarly successful, but whose destinations were not recorded as on the Japan grounds. In later times, canny American masters made equally good cargoes in less time by going more directly to the by then well proven Japan grounds.

This success is all the more impressive given that a close examination of those six logbooks for the 1822 season, plus three for 1823 and two for 1824, shows that the American whalers had still not yet begun exploiting all the best grounds. Despite pages and pages in their logbooks headed "on the coast of Japan," most of them were too far east to be near Japanese coastal waters, and when compared with the optimum areas recorded on Townsend's chart, they were also too far north.

Where Starbuck tended to record only general cruising grounds, such as the frustratingly imprecise term "Pacific Ocean," more is known of the localities visited by the early British whaleships through the painstaking work of A. G. E. Jones. His lists of reports of whaling ships reveal that at

least four London whaleships cruised on the coast of Japan in the latter half of 1822 and five in August 1823. In June and July 1824 Captain Bunker of the *Castor* reported by name and catch no less than twenty-two other British whaleships on the Japan grounds!¹⁹

En route home, the captain and crew of the *Castor* had given the following information to the French explorers with Duperrey:

The whaling ships that cruise on the coast of Japan get there by passing to the west of Australia (New Holland) and through the straits of Timor and the Moluccas. They only stay in the Japanese seas in the good season, and in October descend to temperate latitudes.... In February they climb to the north again, passing between the island groups of Viti [Fiji] and the archipelagoes of Quiros (Espiritu Santo) [now Vanuatu]. They often stop in the seas around the Mulgrave and Caroline Islands, in order to arrive finally on the great [Japan] fishing ground [by April or May] which they do not leave until [October when] they resume cruising [southward]...

I met an English whaler at St Helena, the *Castor*, which had on board 245 tuns of oil and spermaceti, obtained from 86 whales. Those caught in the Tropics were much thinner than those from cold seas, and sometimes 200 are required to obtain 300 barrels of oil, whereas 50 fat whales from the Japan fishery are enough to fill a cargo.... The males are much larger than the females, sometimes up to 70 feet, one will give as much oil, up to 14 barrels, as six females, and the males are the preferred catch.... The fishing on the Japanese coasts, which has been extremely good for many years, had become so poor in 1824 that some ships cruising there had not taken a single whale, and had seen only a very small number....²⁰

Such over fishing was in this case only temporary, but later declining stocks were the hallmark of successful whaling in the Pacific — and

everywhere else too — eventually.

At Japan, coastal fishermen reported to Tokyo on the arrival of foreign vessels. The influx of foreign vessels was thoroughly unwelcome to the Japanese leaders. They had a small but thriving shore whaling industry of their own, which naturally they wanted to protect. They were equally concerned to protect Japan's closed society from uncontrolled foreign trade and from other "malign" foreign influences that might impinge on their territorial sovereignty. When whaleships began to be visible to Japanese living on their coasts, the officials of the Shogunate chose to discourage these foreign "preachers." Instructions were issued to coastal officials not to allow high handed foreigners to undermine their treasured independence. No notice was taken that the whalers were far from home and needed urgently to get better water and firewood and, if at all possible, scurvy-reducing fresh fruits and vegetables. Instead, the Japanese soon showed that any whalers who ventured to go ashore, whether for food and water or to trade, would be expelled and driven off.

The first known expulsion was only twelve months after the pioneer cruise of the *Syren* of London. This occurred in June 1822 when Captain David Kerr of the *Saracen* of London, his ship and her crew of thirty-three were all seized at Uraga near Edo. Although given some immediate humanitarian relief, they were sent away with instructions to tell other whalers never to visit Japan.

Other Japanese archives show that foreigners tried to capture three cows on Takarajima, an island south of Kyushu, in June 1824 and were driven off with several fatalities. Later that month, twelve Englishmen who had come ashore in two boats to get wood and water near Otsumura village, were imprisoned for nineteen days. The Japanese recorded many details, including enough to show that these men were led by Captain Kemp of the London whaleship *Ann* and Captain Gibson of the *Indian*, also of London. They were not treated unkindly, but they too were sent off to warn their whaling colleagues that it was not at all safe to try to go on shore at Japan.

A contemporary report lists no less than twenty-three individually-named London whale-

ships on the coast of Japan in June and July 1824. It seems clear that all the whaleships in sight of land which had offended the Japanese so deeply in 1822 and 1823 were all British. They had approached from the south and passed through the Bonin Islands, and then gone as far north as Honshu, Tokyo, and the northeastern coast. They were indeed "on the coast of Japan," which they could see while being seen by the Japanese ashore. Conversely, the American whalers who had expanded from Hawaii to the northwest on to what they had begun calling "on Japan," "on the coast of Japan," or just "on the Japan grounds" were still cruising far, far to the east, and were seldom more than midway between Japan and Hawaii. Since there were no overlaps or duplication in the British and American lists, it can be said that until as late as 1824 all the vessels reporting "from the Japan grounds" were in fact operating on separate grounds as two separate whale fleets.

The Japanese reacted sharply to the continuing "foreign invasion." In April 1825, before the next season began, the Japanese issued a "shell and repel" edict to confirm (for those who might read Japanese) that intrusions by any foreign interlopers, such as "ignorant whalers... and rude and crude pirates," would not be allowed, not even just for wood and water.²¹ Since there were no other reliable provisioning centers closer than the Hawaiian Islands, the whalers were faced with no practical alternative but to go there to refresh.

As whaling gathered momentum in the North Pacific, the years from 1820 to 1840 saw the safe and sheltered port of Honolulu transformed. It changed steadily from a little village of grass huts into a thriving commercial town serving and servicing a transpacific clientele. From a village with only a handful of foreigners engaged in barter trade, Honolulu grew to a substantial town of over ten thousand Hawaiians and six hundred foreigners. The year of 1819 was one of momentous change for the Hawaiian Islands. The abolition of the traditional kapu system set off a reckless boom of spending by the chiefs, often on credit. This suited many of the foreign traders,

particularly those sending sandalwood, "the firewood of the Gods," to China. Soon a trickle of foreign entrepreneurs, mostly American agents of New England business houses, began to set up shop and settle in Honolulu. The first missionaries arrived in 1820, and the first American whaleships arrived in 1819. They were followed by dozens upon dozens more as a spectacular great bonanza rush began to exploit the riches of the Japan grounds.

The rapid growth of the port of Honolulu can be seen much more clearly following the completion of a huge listing of all shipping arrivals and departures from 1820 to 1840. This lists individually some 3,203 arrivals. Almost half these visits made were by whaleships with 1,286 Americans, 240 British, and nineteen other whaling visits. Another forty percent or more of all arrivals were little inter-island traders. They brought to Honolulu, steadily and reliably, the huge volume of vegetables, fruit and other provisions necessary to feed and supply not only the ever-hungry whalers, but also the new town their trade was generating.²²

By 1840 whaling and transpacific trade had made Honolulu a busy, cosmopolitan center of commerce with burgeoning commercial interests, and street upon street of fine stone storehouses, many of them of two storeys. The traders sold sophisticated goods like clothing, housewares and furnishings, tools and utensils, and foreign foods, while services like banking and insurance also were well established. Port services included carpenters, blacksmiths, coopers, sailmakers, and other craftsmen, with a whole range of refitting facilities not then available anywhere else in the Pacific. From servicing the whalers, Honolulu also soon developed entrepôt trades, at first freighting home to New England or Old England whale oil and whale bone, but soon acting as a general transshipment point for all manner of

transpacific trade goods. It was also a good port at which to replace sick and missing crew.

A young whaler visiting Honolulu in May 1840, Francis Allyn Olmsted, estimated there were now "about 10,000 inhabitants in the town and the vicinity. The foreign residents number not far above 600...." He noted that the town was laid out regularly with wide streets, hard and smooth, and neat buildings with white plastered adobe walls. It was, Olmsted noted, a sharply divided society, split between those supporting the missionaries and those opposed to them, including most traders. He continued:

The port of Honolulu is visited by almost all vessels frequenting the North Pacific, and in the [northern] spring and fall seasons, great numbers of whaleships, principally Americans, touch here for recruits [*i.e.*, provisions] which are supplied in abundance, and of every variety.

The commercial statistics of these islands show that nearly one half of the imports were from the United States, and the arrivals of American ships were more than double the number from all [other] countries. By far the greater proportion of foreign residents [totaling about six hundred] are Americans, and American interests are decidedly predominant throughout the Hawaiian Islands.²³

The penultimate word rests with the immortal Starbuck, who confirmed that "the whale fleet made Honolulu." He might well have added that it was the wealth of the various "Japan grounds" and the Shogun's edict to "shell and repel" whaling visitors, that not only "made Honolulu," but "made the Hawaiian Islands into American territory."

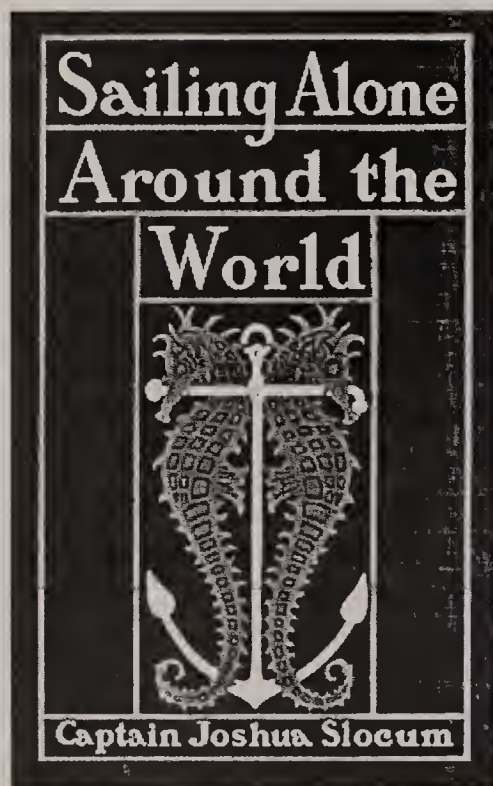


NOTES

1. Charles H. Townsend, "The Distribution of Certain Whales as shown by Records of American Whaleships," *Zoologia* 21 (1935), 1; 3–50 (and maps).
2. The first whaleships in Hawaiian waters were British, not American. In December 1792, the fully-equipped 390-ton London whaleship *Butterworth* was the first big ship to enter Honolulu harbor. She carried a license that would have permitted whaling as well as trading, but there is no evidence whatever that she did any whaling near Hawaii. Other early British visitors may have been capable of whaling (e.g., the *Port au Prince* in 1806; *Duke of Portland* in 1810; *Sir Andrew Hammond* in 1814), but as far as is known, the first vessels to engage in whaling there were, as noted, the two Americans, the *Balaena* and the *Equator* in 1819; the first British whaleship was *L'Aigle* in 1822. Robert L. Webb, *On the Northwest: Commercial Whaling in the North West Pacific 1790–1967* (University of British Columbia, 1988,) 13–15; *Sailors Magazine* (August 1834), 357.
3. Webb, *On the Northwest*, 306.
4. John Cawley, "Statement of the Services of John Cawley, 1793–1834." Printed paper, National Library of Australia, Canberra.
5. Thomas Beale, *The Natural History of the Sperm Whale* (London: Holland Press 1835), 149–150.
6. Frederick Coffin, "Logbook of the ship *Syren* of London, 1819–1822." Mss. Colombia River Maritime Museum, Astoria, Oregon; Beale, *Natural History*, 150.
7. Alexander Starbuck, *History of the American Whale Fishery*, (Washington, D.C. and Waltham, Mass.: Commission on Fish and Fisheries, 1878), 96; Edouard Stackpole, *The Sea Hunters* (New York: J. B. Lippen-cott, 1953); Rhys Richards, "United States Trade with China 1784–1814," *American Neptune* 54 (Special Supplement), 53, 61, 64; Edmund Gardner, mss. letter dated 20 November 1857, in *The Pacific Commercial Advertiser* (Honolulu) 21 January 1858; *Nantucket Inquirer*, 14 December 1872.
8. Stackpole *The Sea Hunters*, 269; *New Bedford Mercury*, 8 June 1821; Starbuck, *History of the American Whale Fishery*, 96.
9. *Sailors Magazine*, August 1834, 357.
10. Starbuck, *History of the American Whale Fishery*, 96; Logbook of the *Maryland* of New Bedford, 1821–1824, Kendall Whaling Museum; Logbook of the *Palladium* of Boston, 1821–1824, Kendall Whaling Museum; Log-book of the *Alexander* of Nantucket, 1821–1824, Kendall Whaling Museum; Logbook of the *Dawn* of New York, 1821–1824, photocopy at Mystic Seaport Museum; Logbook of the *Balaena* of New Bedford, 1818–1821, Old Dartmouth Whaling Museum, New Bedford; Logbook of the *Coquette* of London, 1820–1823, Nantucket Historical Society.
11. *Bedford Mercury*, 8 June 1821; Stackpole, *The Sea Hunters*, 268–269. The first American vessel to visit Japan was the *Lady Washington* under Captain John Kendrick in April 1791. Between 1799 and 1801, at least five American vessels were chartered by the Dutch at Batavia to facilitate their regulated trade with Japan. These earlier visits had almost been forgotten when the "Closed Kingdom" was finally "opened to foreign trade" by Commodore Perry in 1854. But not quite, for remarkably Lincoln Stetson, who had been formerly a seaman on the *Margaret* of Salem when it was at Japan in 1800, was then still alive, and hale and hearty, at Salem in 1860. (W. Crewdson "The Dawn of Western Influence in Japan," *Trans. and Proc. of the Japan Society of London*, 6:2 (1925), 168–204; *Salem Gazette* 8 June 1860; Peter J. Fetchko "Salem Voyages to Japan During the Early Nineteenth Century," *Proceedings, North American Society for Oceanic History*, 1986, 50–54.)
12. Stackpole, *The Sea Hunters*, 306, quoting *Nantucket Inquirer* 7 March 1851; Richards, "United States Trade with China," 54, 64, 70, 75.
13. Stephen Reynolds, *The Journal of Stephen Reynolds, 1823–1829*, (Salem: Peabody Essex Museum, and Honolulu, Ku Pa'a, 1989), 109.
14. *Boston Courier*, 19 December 1826.
15. *Nautical Magazine* (1858), 604; Charles Townsend 1935.
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BROADSIDES AND BROWN WATER:

THE US NAVY IN RIVERINE WARFARE DURING THE WAR OF 1812

R. BLAKE DUNNAVENT

Shortly after nightfall on 23 December 1814, Lieutenant John D. Henley maneuvered the schooner *Carolina*, commanded by Commodore Daniel T. Patterson, down the Mississippi River from New Orleans and anchored her on the opposite bank from the British camp at General Jacques Villiere's plantation, nine miles from the Crescent City. Armed with twelve 12-pounders, and three long 9s, the 89-foot, 6-inch schooner had been dispatched to support Major General Andrew Jackson's right flank in the ensuing night engagement. At 7:30 P.M. Patterson yelled, "Now then, give it to them for the honor of America." With a bright fiery flash accompanied by a deafening roar, the grapeshot ripped into the heart of the British camp. The confused and bloodied redcoats scrambled for protection near the levee or whatever cover could be found. Amidst this confusion, General Jackson's dual ground forces attacked the startled British.¹

Although exceptions exist, typically, American historians have studied the US Navy's role in the War of 1812 in terms of broad histories, single ship engagements, biographies, and examinations of the war on the lakes. Despite the importance of this approach, relatively few historians have analyzed the broader implications affecting either governmental politics or future naval policy. Instead of more specialized treatises, naval historians have published monographs and articles avoiding the impact of the US Navy in the War of 1812 on the nineteenth and later

twentieth century navies.

The War of 1812 represents a valuable part of the early cumulative experiences gained in combat. Although riverine warfare tactical doctrine evolved slowly from informal to formal doctrine over a period of two centuries, the Navy's and later the US Marine Corps' riverine warfare tactical doctrines originated partially on the bayous and lakes of the United States in its second conflict with Great Britain.²

But what is riverine warfare and tactical doctrine? A definition of the former entails the projection of naval power into a riverine environment utilizing riverine forces to conduct independent operations or sustained campaigns. The area or environment in which this form of warfare occurs is an inland area comprising both land and water, with extensive water surface and/or inland waterways, such as rivers, canals, swamps, marshes, streams, bayous, and lakes that provide routes for surface transportation and communications. Tactical doctrine can be defined as the tentative set of guidelines under which naval and military personnel operate when in combat. This may be informal, which predominated in the Navy through letters, reports, and verbal orders, or formalized within a published manual.³

The Navy's involvement in the war, according to most historians, occurred at sea, on the Great Lakes, and in defense of key coastal and river based cities such as Baltimore, New Orleans, and New York. The Navy operated in these three separate theaters because of the legacy of Jeffersonian naval policy and ideology. Jefferson defended his beliefs, dubbed by historians the "gunboat policy," based on French use of gunboats "during the attack on the St. Lawrence River during the Seven Years' War" and British use "for an assault on Mobile in 1760." Jefferson

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Lake Ontario. William S. Dudley, ed., *The Naval War of 1812: A Documentary History*, vols. 1-. Washington, D.C.: Naval Historical Center, 1985.

noted the importance gunboats had played “for ravaging the rivers” during the American Revolution. Throughout his two terms in office, he focused on national security through “a balanced defense consisting of ships-of-the-line; frigates; smaller vessels, including gunboats; floating stationary, and moving batteries; as well as coastal fortifications.”⁴ Jefferson’s concepts, combined with strategic necessity, led to the deployment of naval vessels on the nation’s inland waterways.

Lieutenant Melancthon T. Woolsey, stationed at Sackett’s Harbor, Lake Ontario, was involved in the first riverine operation of the war. On 19 July 1812 aboard the brig *Oneida*, Woolsey, with his fleet of eight vessels, engaged a five-ship British naval force off Sackett’s Harbor. Because his vessels mounted several long 32-pounders which began ripping into the British squadron before the latter could maneuver within gun range of the American force, Woolsey’s small force repulsed the British attack. As a result of this action, the British withdrew three of their vessels, but sent two down the St. Lawrence River. In order to control Lake Ontario, Woolsey recognized that he needed to command the entrance to the lake. He ordered Lieutenant Henry Wells, in command of the gunboat *Julia*, into the St. Law-

rence to search for the two British vessels.⁵

Subsequently, Woolsey commanded Wells to proceed to Ogdensburg to either destroy or capture any British vessels. When in transit, Woolsey ordered Wells to keep his “men as much as possible concealed [and] also cover the great Gun in order to prevent as much as possible an alarm on the Canada Shore.” On 31 July Wells descended the St. Lawrence, and at 4:00 P.M. he observed a small British boat ahead of him. He ordered the occupants to halt and fired a musket round over their heads. The men on board the *Julia* let loose a fusillade of lead as the British made good their escape. About fifteen minutes later, Wells located the two English vessels near Elizabeth Town, and at 4:30 P.M. the *Julia* opened fire with one of her 6-pounders and the 32-pounder. The opponents engaged in sustained bombardment until sunset, when Wells withdrew to prevent being boarded during the night. By 3:00 A.M. he managed to retire to Ogdensburg at the confluence of the Oswegatchie and the St. Lawrence rivers. British naval vessels then blockaded the St. Lawrence, denying the *Julia* means of escape.⁶

A subsequent riverine operation occurred in October on the Niagara River. On the west bank of this waterway was Fort Erie, a British stronghold, and opposite this formidable post on the



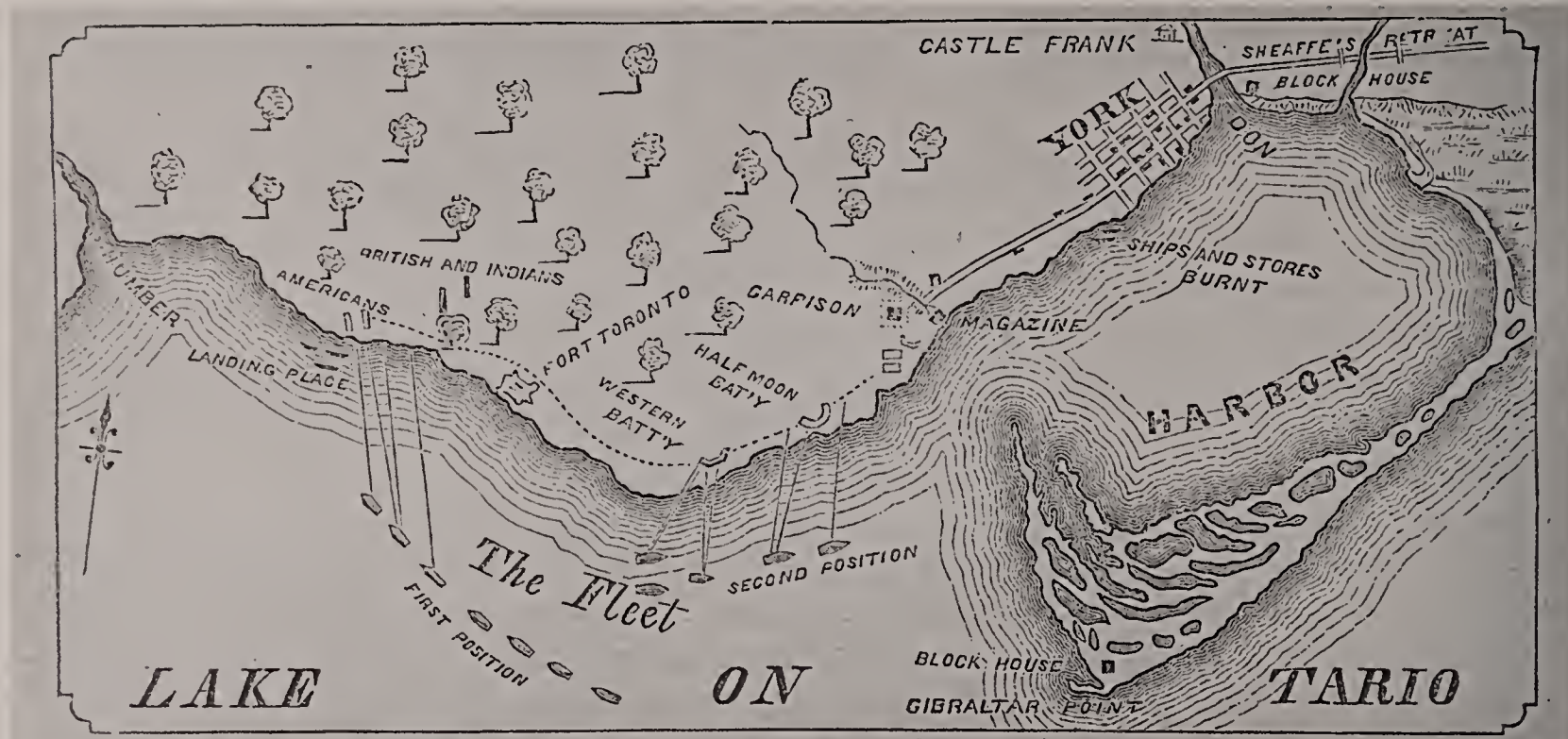
Lake Erie. William S. Dudley, ed., *The Naval War of 1812: A Documentary History*, vols. 1-. Washington, D.C.: Naval Historical Center, 1985.

east bank was a fortified American position at Black Rock. On 8 October two Royal Navy brigs slipped into position below Fort Erie's guns, giving the British a tactical superiority in firepower which would prevent American naval movement at the northeast corner of Lake Erie. Lieutenant Jesse D. Elliott, previously ordered to Lake Erie to build a naval force, recognized the imminent danger the two warships presented to his command. At 1:00 A.M. on 9 October, Elliott, with two boats and one hundred men, silently rowed two hours to their quarry. At 3:00 A.M. Elliott's men quietly scrambled onto the brigs, captured the crews, and proceeded with their new prizes to Black Rock.⁷

When Elliott was transferred to Lake Ontario, the small naval force which remained at Black Rock was placed under Army authority. This compelled the senior ranking Navy officer, Lieutenant Samuel Angus, to follow Army orders. On 27 November General Alexander Smyth decided to assault the British position at Fort Erie and requested naval support from Angus. In a daring night raid, a combined Army and Navy force loaded into ten boats and began slowly rowing on

the river. According to Angus, the men "got no more than three fourths of the way across, before the British discovered us, and opened a severe fire from two Field Pieces... and a well directed fire of Musquetry." The Americans rushed the British position "spiked the field pieces, and r[a]n the Ca[i]sson in[to] the Water." The confused British troopers quickly regrouped, inflicted a number of casualties, and forced the Americans to withdraw.⁸ Riverine engagements and operations ceased for the remainder of the year because of freezing weather conditions, and began anew in 1813.

Following the events at Black Rock, the Secretaries of the Navy and War recognized the necessity of joint operations, discussed the options available to the two services and settled on appropriate procedures. On 8 April 1813 the War Department released this agreement, which focused on command and control and stated that only naval officers would command naval vessels and only Army officers would command troops. It further stressed that if a naval component operated in concert with military forces on land, the naval force would serve under its own com-



The American Attack on York. Benson J. Lossing, *The Pictorial Field-Book of the War of 1812*. New York: Harper & Bros., 1868.

manders and would have distinct and independent assignments.⁹ About eleven days later both branches implemented these procedures.

To gain control of Lake Ontario, military and naval leaders understood the importance of seizing key towns and ports on the lake. On 28 April a combined American riverine force attacked and captured York, the capital of Upper Canada. This operation began on 25 April, when a task force of seventeen hundred troops and fifteen naval vessels departed the safety of Sackett's Harbor. Commodore Isaac Chauncey, commander of the naval armada, brought his vessels to a position three miles from York. The military forces, under the overall command of Major General Henry Dearborn and led by Brigadier General Zebulon Pike, disembarked into smaller craft and proceeded to the shore. Due to a heavy breeze, the boats drifted from their designated landing points, exposing them to a withering fire from enemy forces. After disembarkation, Chauncey ordered his craft to maneuver into position to bombard the town's fort and protect the landing. By 2:00 P.M. the Army had raised the Stars and Stripes over the fort and captured the town, not without the tragic loss of General Pike who died when an arms magazine exploded. On 30 April the troops reembarked and left York.¹⁰

Following this victory, the American armed forces, in a continued attempt to gain strategic control of Lake Ontario and the Niagara frontier, planned to attack Fort George on the Canadian side of the Niagara River. Chauncey's force combined with forty-five hundred troops departed Sackett's Harbor on 22 May. By 26 May the force had reached their destination and Chauncey, assisted by Master Commandant Oliver H. Perry, reconnoitered a landing site for the detachment of soldiers. At 3:00 A.M. the next morning, while the men disembarked from their transports into one hundred barges and prepared to move ashore, the other vessels maneuvered near enemy locations to provide fire support for the assault and to prevent enemy gunfire from enfilading the landing force. Within eight hours the British guns were silenced, and the Americans captured the fort and town.¹¹

In the summer riverine warfare developed on Lake Champlain. Due to British gunboats raiding the shoreline near the US/Canadian border, the US naval commander on Lake Champlain, Lieutenant Thomas Macdonough, dispatched the sloops *Eagle* and *Growler* to intercept and deter any further British action. On 2 June Lieutenant Sidney Smith, commander of the patrol, awaited the British at the mouth of the Richelieu River, where officers and crews could observe taunting

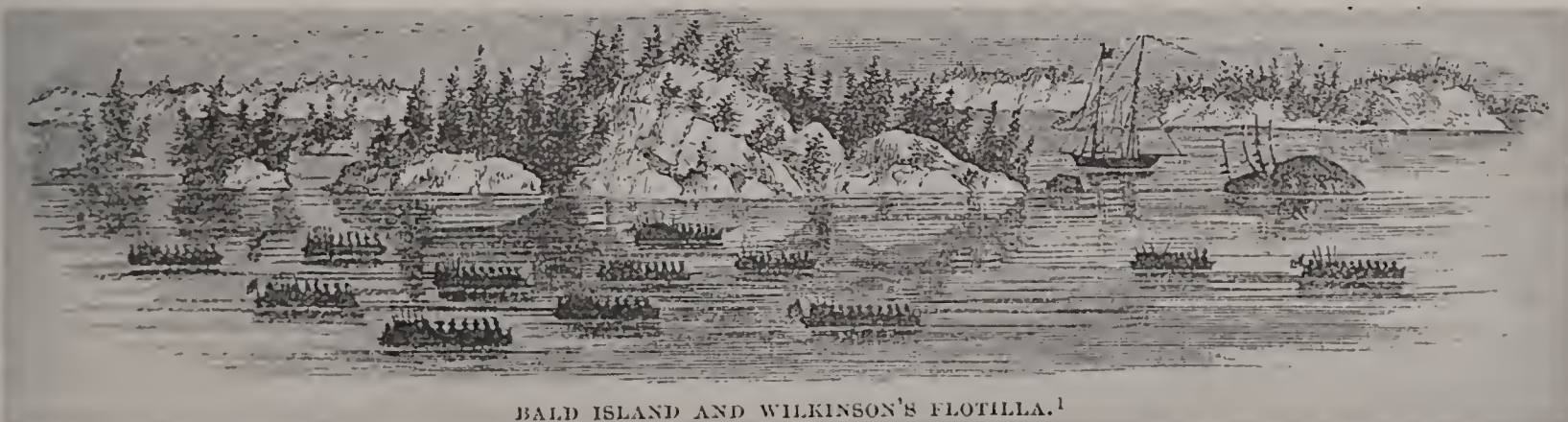
British gunboat crews just across the border. On the following day, despite his subordinates' expressed concerns about the narrowness of the river and a southerly wind that would prevent a swift exit, Smith ordered both vessels to proceed up the river. After luring the *Growler* and *Eagle* six miles upriver near the British post on Isle aux Noix, the gunboats turned to attack the Americans within the narrow confines of the Richelieu. As Smith's force struggled to escape, redcoats appeared on both sides of the riverbanks about two hundred yards away. Caught between musket and artillery fire from the banks and cannon fire from the approaching gunboats, Smith and his men fought a four hour duel. Despite desperate and heroic actions on behalf of the US bluejackets, both the *Growler* and *Eagle* succumbed to overwhelming firepower and were captured.¹²

A month later, in July 1813, riverine warfare began on the East Coast of the United States in the Chesapeake Bay region. In an attempt to gather intelligence on British dispositions, the *Asp* and the *Scorpion*, two American schooners attached to the Potomac flotilla, cruised to the river's mouth to investigate British movements. After reaching the Chesapeake Bay, the two US naval vessels turned about, transited ten miles up the Potomac and moved for safety onto the Yeocomico River, a small tributary of the Potomac. On 14 July the US sailors spotted sails closing on their position. The *Scorpion* made it to the Potomac and stood up the river while the *Asp*, because of a strong head wind, was unable to exit the Yeocomico. Observing that the British had blocked the only escape, Midshipman James Sigouney, commander of the *Asp*, ordered his

vessel further up the small river. When he noticed that the British had anchored their larger vessels and sent three small boats to capture the *Asp*, Sigouney began firing salvos which eventually repulsed the attack. Undaunted, an hour later the British dispatched five boats which overwhelmed the *Asp* and set fire to the American boat.¹³

On Lake Ontario in late July, Commodore Chauncey attempted two riverine amphibious landings to destroy British supplies ashore at Burlington Bay and York. On 29 July near Burlington Bay, Chauncey disembarked two 125-man reconnaissance parties to ascertain British troop strength. These groups detected six hundred to eight hundred redcoats in well defended positions. Knowing that he was outnumbered, the overall ground commander, Colonel Winfield Scott, ordered the ground force to reembark to prevent a catastrophic engagement. On 31 July Chauncey disembarked Scott's men, who went into York, set fire to many of the buildings, and captured flour, shot, shells, small boats and cannon, which would seriously cripple any British campaigns in late 1813 or 1814. Following a successful day, the ground element clambered back aboard their transports and the entire force departed for Niagara.¹⁴

By mid September the American Navy had gained control of Lake Erie due to the efforts of Master Commandant Perry and his fleet. He and Major General William Henry Harrison recognized the strategic importance of hitting the British who were retreating from the Detroit frontier. With Perry's advice and assistance, General Harrison chose to attack Malden and then press on to Detroit. From 24–26 September Perry



BAIRD ISLAND AND WILKINSON'S FLOTILLA.¹

Major General James Wilkinson's flotilla on the St. Lawrence River in 1813 represents one of the earliest forms of the American mobile riverine force. Benson J. Lossing, *The Pictorial Field-Book of the War of 1812*. New York: Harper & Bros., 1868.

transported thirty-five hundred troops to Middle Sister Island, twelve nautical miles from Malden, in preparation for the upcoming assault. While his men were being relocated closer to their landing site, Harrison wrote explicit tactical orders for the landing force once it reached the shore. In addition, he penned subsequent orders which gave the Navy command of the force while in transit and loading and offloading the landing force. Moreover, Harrison's General Orders directed the Navy to provide fire support for his troops moving ashore. At 3:00 A.M. on 27 September, Perry's sixteen vessels loaded with ninety landing craft departed Put-in Bay and embarked the soldiers on Middle Sister Island. At 2:00 P.M. Perry positioned his vessels to provide fire support for the landing craft which departed forty-five minutes later. The landing was unopposed, and Harrison decided to proceed to Sandwich before advancing on Detroit. Throughout the operation, Perry's ships provided logistical and fire support for Harrison's thirty-five hundred strong ground component.¹⁵

On Lake Ontario in October, Chauncey took part in a joint riverine operation, when Major General James Wilkinson submitted a proposal to the War Department to acquire Montreal via the St. Lawrence River. This bold move required the Navy to supply vessels to transport Wilkinson's invasion force. Despite Chauncey's protests, the Secretary of the Navy ordered the commodore to assist the Army. The ground forces, following some delay due to bad weather, joined Chauncey's waterborne element near French Creek at the entrance of the St. Lawrence from 3–5 November. Chauncey's force remained at the mouth of the St. Lawrence to block any British attempt at entering the river and striking the invasion force from the rear. With six thousand men on board three hundred fifty flatboats, the flotilla moved on the river to Morristown, New York, where the men disembarked to avoid the British guns at Prescott, on the Canadian shore, a few miles upriver. As the boats slowly plied the water in front of Prescott, the British fired fifty salvos at the American force with little effect. Once the boats safely moved past the British guns, the

troops reembarked. Several days later, farther down the river, the troops disembarked again and suffered a devastating defeat at Chrysler's Farm. This military debacle combined with freezing sleet and rain forced the Army to turn back to Sackett's Harbor.¹⁶

Winter precluded further riverine operations until spring 1814. On 25 May Joshua Barney, commander of the Chesapeake Potomac Flotilla (which included his ship the *Scorpion*, two gunboats, thirteen barges, a lookout boat, and a galley) departed the Potomac River in an attempt to launch a surprise foray against the British forces in Tangier Sound. If successful, the attack would relieve pressure on Baltimore and Washington, D.C. Within days, Barney had reached the Patuxent River from which he hoped to attack the British. As dawn broke on 1 June his force began to move out of the Patuxent into the bay; however, his galley and lookout boat spotted the enemy closing on his position. Barney ordered his small armada to come about and return to the Patuxent for protection from the superior British force, consisting of a 74-gun line-of-battle ship, seven barges, and three schooners. At 4:00 P.M. Barney's flotilla entered the Patuxent with the *Scorpion* leading and one of the gunboats in the rear. Carefully observing his pursuers, Barney recognized that the British vessels would overtake his slower gunboats if he did not take swift action. Barney ordered one gunboat and the *Scorpion* to anchor and begin firing at the enemy vessels. Simultaneously, he dispatched a number of his barges to turn and bear down on the advancing enemy boats. In retaliation, a British barge launched several rockets at the approaching American boats. The British halted their advance and chose to blockade the river, which permitted the US flotilla to retreat further up the Patuxent.¹⁷

Still trying to avoid the Royal Navy, on 7 June Barney's force maneuvered toward St. Leonard's Creek, a waterway on the eastern side of the Patuxent. At 5:00 A.M. the following day, Barney's naval force penetrated St. Leonard's Creek to escape the British. At 8:00 A.M. two large enemy warships anchored at the mouth of the creek while a number of British barges moved up the creek to attack Barney's force. Royal Navy barges began firing rockets at the American

flotilla, whereupon Barney ordered his thirteen barges to attack the advancing British force. This bold move forced the British to withdraw temporarily. Hours later, enemy boats moved within rocket range of the American barges and opened fire, scoring several direct hits while staying out of range of American cannon fire.¹⁸

On the evening of 9 June, the British dispatched twenty barges into St. Leonard's Creek either to annihilate in battle or to lure the American force out to the creek's mouth in order for the larger guns of the British warships to destroy the small American boats. Barney, aware of his tenuous position, chose to close with the British barges. The latter immediately withdrew after a brief engagement. At 2:00 P.M. the next day, he noticed a rocket barge, two schooners, and twenty-one barges approaching his location. He ordered his boats to engage the enemy. Despite the sinking of one American craft, the British retired with Barney's force in pursuit. At the creek's mouth the American force fired feverishly at their opponents which resulted in, as Barney wrote:

a large schooner nearly destroyed having several shot through her at the waters edge, her deck torn up, gun dismounted and main mast nearby cut off about half way up and rendered unserviceable.... [British] Commodore's boat was cut in two, [and] a shot went through the *Rocket* boat. One of the small schooners carrying two 32 pounders had a shot which raked her from aft, forward; the boat generally suffered.

Following this success, Barney contemplated exiting the creek but the large British vessels on the Patuxent fired several salvos at the American barges forcing them to retire into the creek. On 11 June, in an effort to protect his flotilla, Barney placed Marines, who had recently arrived, "along the creek to annoy [the British], if they venture up." He also "erected a small battery, (1.24 lb. carronade), at the mouth of the branch where the *Scorpion* and gunboat lay, and also drove *piles* across the creek with a *boom*." Barney did not engage the British for another fifteen days when

he received orders from the Secretary of the Navy to depart St. Leonard's Creek and head up the Patuxent. The unsuspecting British ships at the mouth of St. Leonard's did not know that Barney's forces now comprised not only a naval flotilla but also land based artillery and Marine Corps infantry which had been attached to his flotilla between 11–25 June. At 4:00 A.M. on 26 June, Barney launched an attack on the British ships. After two hours the British ships slipped down river while Barney's flotilla, except the gunboats which had to be left behind and scuttled, moved onto and up the Patuxent.¹⁹

Meanwhile, a small riverine operation began on the upper St. Lawrence River. Commodore Chauncey noted that "the enemy was constantly receiving military stores at Kingston by the St. Lawrence." Accordingly, he thought it "might be practicable to surprise and capture a brigade of boats with store[s] on board." On 15 June one of his subordinates left Sackett's Harbor with three gigs. They rowed to the Thousand Islands, "where he hauled his boats on shore and concealed them." At 9:00 A.M. on 19 June the British discovered the small detachment and attacked with the gunboat *Black Snake*. Although surprised, the Americans managed to overwhelm the British and took the gunboat as a prize. Within hours, however, additional British forces moved into the area, which compelled the US bluejackets to scuttle and sink their prize and disperse into the countryside.²⁰

Riverine warfare also played a key role on the Gulf Coast during the Battle of New Orleans. On 23 December 1814, in a downpour, British Major General John Keane dispatched sixteen hundred British troops to Bayou Bienvenue from Pea Island. At 6:00 A.M. they reached the mouth of the bayou, at 9:00 A.M. they proceeded inland through the soggy terrain, and by noon they had reached the Mississippi River. Throughout the day reinforcements continued to arrive at Keane's position at General Jacques Villiere's plantation nine miles from the Crescent City. The British, although they posted pickets around their perimeter, did not prepare camp defenses adequate to repulse an attack. Confident of their abilities,



The USS *Carolina* providing riverine fire support below New Orleans on December 23, 1814. Benson J. Lossing, *The Pictorial Field-Book of the War of 1812*. New York: Harper & Bros., 1868.

especially following their victory at Washington, and certain of American ineptitude, around 5:00 P.M. the redcoats built large campfires to cook dinner. Shortly thereafter they readied for bed.²¹

Major General Andrew Jackson, who had received word that the British had taken a position on the Mississippi, planned a three pronged night attack using both military and naval forces. While the ground elements would hit the British from two different flanks, naval forces would provide fire support from the river. Shortly after nightfall Lieutenant John D. Henley maneuvered the schooner *Carolina* down the river from New Orleans and anchored her across the river from the British camp. Armed with a variety of weapons, the US Navy fired the opening shots of the 23 December night engagement. At 7:30 P.M. the *Carolina* fired into the heart of the British camp, which caused widespread confusion amongst the redcoats. Meanwhile, Jackson's ground forces attacked the confused and startled British Army. By 9:30 P.M., he decided to withdraw from the action due to thick fog which engulfed the battle-

field, making military targets indistinguishable.²²

On Christmas Eve, while the *Carolina* maintained a continual bombardment of the British position, the ship-sloop *Louisiana*, commanded by Commodore Daniel Patterson, slipped into a position a mile upriver to support the *Carolina*, which now was on the western bank of the river, to harass the British with her cannon. For two more days the American naval forces continued to fire salvos from their long range cannon into the British camp. On 26 December Henley attempted to relocate the *Carolina* closer to New Orleans; yet, because of “the wind being at N. N. W. and blowing fresh and too scant to get underway... and the current too rapid,” the vessel remained near the British camp. In the hours before dawn on 27 December, the British, using howitzers and a mortar, fired red hot shot at the *Carolina*. On the second round the British shot “lodged in the schooner’s main hold under her cables.”²³ With fire sweeping through the ship, the crew abandoned her, and at dawn the flames reached the magazine, detonating the ship.

The next morning the British attempted a reconnaissance in force against the American forward positions. After the redcoats had marched about five miles they spotted American forces dug in right in front of their advance. When the British began to attack, Jackson's five field pieces and the *Louisiana*, which provided fire support for Jackson's right flank, discharged a devastating amount of iron into the British columns. The *Louisiana's* accurate naval gunfire forced the British infantry to dive into muddy ditches for protection. For seven hours the *Louisiana* bombarded the British with over eight hundred shots. The effective American artillery and naval gunfire forced the shattered British lines to pull back in the evening to avoid further losses.²⁴ The American victory at New Orleans, which inflicted tremendous British losses, was the final engagement of the war; ironically, this stunning defeat for British arms was fought after the belligerents had signed the peace treaty.

The US Navy's involvement in the War of 1812 provided two new antecedents for future tactical doctrine, daytime ambush and orders which outline tactical procedures. Naval forces in this era also implemented riverine tactics previously used during the American Revolution such as amphibious landings and fire support which demonstrated the benefits of informal tactical doctrine.

Commodore Chauncey introduced a new tactic, the daytime ambush, when he conceived and carried out a plan for hitting the British with a surprise attack on the St. Lawrence. He ordered Lieutenant Francis H. Gregory to "take three gigs with only their crews... in each boat, and proceed down the St. Lawrence, secret himself on some of the islands and wait a favorable opportunity to surprise a brigade of loaded boats."²⁵ The lieutenant immediately set out down the river and prepared an ambush.

The precursor to twentieth century riverine tactical doctrine also emerged in the War of 1812. Cognizant of potential difficulties which could surface requiring collaboration between the two services, Secretary of the Navy Paul Hamilton forwarded a circular letter to certain officers ordering them to cooperate with the Army primarily in furnishing supplies. This letter provided the

precedent for additional joint cooperation and later operations. With prior inter-service cooperation established, the War and Navy Departments adopted the first formal doctrine on 8 April 1813. Concerned more with command and control than tactics, the agreement asserted that "No Officer of the Army... shall on any pretence command any of the Ships or Vessels of the Navy... nor shall any Officer of the said Navy command, under any pretence, any Troops of the Army." Furthermore, the memo stated, "When the services of the naval forces or any part thereof may be necessary on Land, in cooperation with the Military, the said naval forces shall have a distinct & independent service assigned to them under their own commander" mutually agreed upon by the "Military & Naval commanders." A subsequent document addressed both command and control and the Navy's tactical role in riverine amphibious landing. It specified that "the arrangement for landing the troops, will be made entirely under the direction of an officer of the navy" and that "debarkation of the troops will be covered by the cannon of the vessels."²⁶

Fire support also was a valuable asset to riverine forces in this era. The tactical execution of this function by the commander of the *Carolina* secured General Jackson's right flank against the British attack during the 23 December night engagement. Subsequently, on 28 December, when the British attempted their push, the *Louisiana* not only prevented the British advance but turned the tide of the battle. In fact, according to historian Wilburt S. Brown, "The gunfire of the *Louisiana* was the decisive factor in the December 28 action."²⁷

Throughout the War of 1812, the US Navy and Army conducted numerous riverine amphibious landings. For example, in July 1813 Commodore Chauncey, with a combined ground component, carried out two consecutive landings on Lake Ontario. Chauncey, on 29 July, "sent two parties ashore [at Burlington Bay] and surprised [and] took some of the inhabitants from who we learned that the enemy had received considerable reinforcements." Additional troops disembarked "the next morning and reconnoitred the enemy's position;" they discovered that the British were too strong for them to attack. Chauncey then

reembarked these troops and sailed for York where, on 31 July, he disembarked the troops to destroy the town's strategic facilities.²⁸ This demonstrated to later naval leaders the flexibility of such a mobile force,

The tactics employed during the War of 1812 provided lessons for the Navy not only in its

conflicts and wars of the nineteenth but later for the twentieth century brown water navy. Most importantly for the approaching war with the Seminoles in Florida, the bluejackets' actions in the early 1800s demonstrated the utility and flexibility of riverine forces.



NOTES

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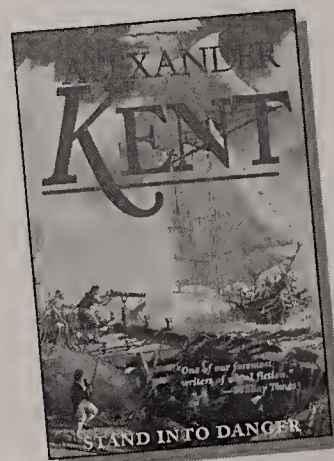
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THE *GERTRUDE L. THEBAUD*

AGROUND IN FROBISHER BAY:

WITH DONALD B. MACMILLAN'S 1937 ARCTIC EXPEDITION

WALTER STAPLES

Captain John Crowell was no stranger to the Arctic when, in 1937, he assumed command of the *Gertrude L. Thebaud*, the famous racing schooner of the Gloucester fishing fleet, for Donald B. MacMillan's sixteenth expedition. He had been on three previous trips with MacMillan and had safely anchored the *Bowdoin* in this same bay where the *Thebaud* was now aground. The tide receded at a rapid rate for the next three hours or more, and the list of the *Thebaud* remained constant, held in part by a rounded boul-

der against her hull.

MacMillan maintained an outward appearance of confidence that the schooner would refloat at high tide, reminding all that his own schooner, the *Bowdoin*, had grounded many times in the Arctic and always refloated without damage. Never a man for many words, Captain Crowell said little as he constantly examined all aspects of the vessel settling on the rocky shoreline. Charlie Hatcher, ship's cook, had already stuffed his belongings into a sea bag, donned his oilskins,

Walter Staples is a native of Maine and a graduate of the University of Maine. He traveled extensively in the United States, Canada, and Europe while engaged for twenty-eight years in disease research for a major New England poultry breeder. Following retirement in 1980, he divided his time between logging, gardening, Atlantic salmon fishing, in Newfoundland and New Brunswick, and writing, not necessarily in that order. He has published short stories, articles, and poems in newspapers and magazines. He resides with his wife Virginia on his farm in the foothills of the White Mountains in New Hampshire.

The first ten pictures in this article were taken by Walter Staples

Donald B. MacMillan, a native of Maine, was a graduate of Bowdoin College and in a teaching position in Massachusetts when Robert Peary was searching for qualified companions to assist him in his third effort to reach the North Pole. MacMillan, an enthusiastic reader of Arctic exploration literature, was accepted. He was in charge of a base camp when Peary, with Matthew Henson and several Eskimos, made a successful dash to the Pole. He learned the ways of the Eskimoes and their language, and spent two years in Elsmere Land attempting to verify Peary's claim that he had seen a mountain range in that

frozen north.

MacMillan had the schooner *Bowdoin* built to his own specifications, and made more than twenty-five expeditions to the Arctic Circle and beyond. Because of his extensive experience in the Arctic, he and his schooner were recruited by the US Navy for the duration of World War II, and when the war ended he became a navy commander. He was active in various kinds of scientific research from geography to archaeology. His love for the Arctic and its people, combined with his teaching background, resulted in his taking college students as crew and a team of scientists on many summer trips to Northern Labrador, Baffin Island, and beyond. Except for the 1937 expedition in the *Gertrude L. Thebaud*, of which I was a member, all other voyages were made in the *Bowdoin*.

Bowdoin College gave permission to quote from Admiral MacMillan's journal.

MacMillan was an excellent photographer and gave many illustrated lectures to finance the expeditions and to provide considerable amounts of food and clothing for the Moravian missionaries of northern Labrador. He wrote several books about the Arctic, and died in Provincetown, Massachusetts, at the age of ninety-four.



MacMillan and Peter Stengel, Hudson's Bay.

and gone ashore, proclaiming loudly that he had "seen them like this before and she will never float again." If there was any fear among us students, it did not show. The absolute confidence in MacMillan, because of his Arctic exploits, blinded all to recognition of the dangerous situa-

tion. That trip was perhaps more dangerous than crossing the bay because of the lack of safe anchorages along the way of steep cliffs and glacier runs. Staying where we were in the well-hidden fiord offered little hope of being located except by air; and there were few planes

in those days. Our food supply possibly could have been stretched to two months. Our clothing was hardly suitable for a winter in the Arctic.

Danger in the Arctic had been brought home to us a few days earlier. We were pinned down in Lady Job Harbour, just inside Cape Chidley, waiting for ice to clear from Hudson's Strait so that we could cross to Resolution Island and go on to Baffin Island. The final paragraph of my diary for July 25, 1937, summarized the situation:

I suppose as I think of it now that it was rather



Search for harbor south shore Frobisher Bay.

dangerous last night: unable to hold an anchorage, the wind howling, the schooner bending and twisting among the huge ice chunks, the rapid tides and the nearby cliffs. But then it was a weird sort of beauty and adventure with no one afraid, everyone helping; but something which I doubt very much if we have the opportunity to experience again for a long, long time. I remember Bill Partridge last night, windblown in oil-skins, saying, "Isn't this great!"



Search for harbor south shore Frobisher Bay.

After several days of waiting in Lady Job Harbour, the action of wind and tide temporarily cleared the ice from our route across Hudson's Strait. We made a courtesy visit at Resolution Island radio station and proceeded northwesterly along the southern shore of Frobisher Bay. On July 30 we put ashore a group of students and scientists who climbed to the upper levels of Grinnell Glacier. Without an organized climbing plan they separated into small groups, with some individuals on skis climbing faster and farther than others and some alone over the snow-covered and hazardous ice crevasses.

The ship's log for the day, usually written by the student on watch, was more detailed than usual and seems to have been written by Captain Crowell:

July 29, 1937 ... Thursday

5:05 am hove up. Left Jackman Sound. Overcast.

9:00 Arrived York Sound (?) where Grinnell Glacier comes to the bay. Vessel touched forw'd on ledge but re-floated.

9:30 Party ashore with altimeters etc. to

conquer the ice cap and ski.

11:30 Unable to find anchorage in York (?) Sound. Proceeded to better position to view glacier in next small bay to N' Westward.

4:00 Returned to York Sound to pick up party.

4:15 Again proceeded North and past Pres. Seat and Chocolate Drop.

6:00 Attempted to find suitable anchorage in Wintern Bay (?) but found only deep water. Ice out in bay.

9:00 Moored vessel at foot of Griffin Bay (?). Port anchor forw'd — cable to shore astern — 4 fathoms at half tide. Ran out anchor and wire rope off star. quarter and hove stern off. 7 fathoms under stern, 4 fathoms under bow.

Not being sure of the locations, Crowell used question marks after them.

It had been a strenuous day for those who had



V. C. Wynne Edwards on Grinnell Glacier, S. Side Frobisher Bay.

climbed the glacier and many had retired as soon as the *Thebaud* was anchored. Charles Edwards was one of the party who had climbed the glacier.

After narrowly escaping with his life from a fall into a crevasse, he ended his July 29 diary entry as follows:

Although it was a magnificent scene, one of the most beautiful and most frightening (a bare, natural untouched beauty), I thanked God I was alive and safe. We rowed out to the *Thebaud* and started up the coast. As I was tired after 7 hours of walking, I got to bed as soon as possible as I was on watch at midnight.

MacMillan ended his journal entry for July 29:

Anchored at last in a deep fiord where Jack [Captain Crowell] anchored the *Bowdoin* in 1931. In order to find water shallow enough he ran into a bight, dropped anchor, ran a wire to the cliff, and dropped a kedge well off the starboard quarter. We are too close to the cliff if the wind should blow off nor'west.

Our records, diary, and journal entries, and possibly parts of the previous quotes, were written the next day "after the fact" from memories of the various individuals. Pictures were taken during the period of waiting from the grounding until the tide went down, but there were no pictures — and certainly no writing in the diaries — during the salvage effort. With the exception of three persons — Charles Edwards, the student on watch from midnight until he reported the grounding, Captain Crowell to whom he reported, and engineer Beck who was called to start the

engine — all other members of the expedition were first aware of the situation when the call went out, "All hands on deck!" at about 3:20 A.M. Many on board were awakened by the motor starting, but none got up until the call to all hands was given.

Except for some differences in tasks performed by individuals, the diary reports on the sequence of events and the exhaustion as a result of the superhuman physical efforts, all with no complaints. Charles Edwards headed his diary report:

Friday July 30th The "Wreck" Griffin Bay.

I was awakened at 12 by Street [Streeter Bass] for anchor watch, and went on deck to find it fairly dark. We were moved close to the cliff with the bow and stern anchor off, a cable ashore. The tide was going out, and I was getting worried, and from 2:30 on watched closely. Suddenly I saw some rocks right under her beam and called the captain. Just before I called, the bow swung so I imagined she was still afloat, but when he came on she was fast aground as a kick

astern failed to save her. We at once called all hands at about 3:00. She stayed level until about 3:30, when suddenly she leaned to port on the rocks facing the cliff...

MacMillan wrote in his journal:

July 30, 1937. A loud yell of "All hands on deck" brought us out of our bunks this morning in a hurry. It was about 4:00 am. Some one on watch failed to notice that we were on the bottom and the tide falling... a serious predicament if the bottom is not the right kind of bottom, and it generally isn't up here in Frobisher Bay. Fortunately we fell in toward the cliff. If we had fallen to starboard and off shore we would have lost the ship without doubt. Even so, it was serious enough to plan for a total loss and safe retreat of the thirty-seven men. As the tide went down and the angle of heel increased, crash after crash followed. Everything that could move did so with a bang. The cabin and fore-castle floors, and the floors of our state-rooms were a sight to behold. Barrels, nets, buckets, etcetera on our deck all went to loo'ard. The water was now well over the rail.

My diary deals with considerable detail of my activities and my observations during the day:

July 31, Saturday morning, 10 o'clock
Gertrude L. Thebaud,
 York Sound

Some time after three, someone awoke me and said that we were aground. But I thought for the moment that there was nothing I could do about it... it was a starboard watch man getting

the starboard up; so I lay there. But in a little while the call went out for all hands to come on deck. So I dressed in clean winter underwear and dry clothes all around and went on deck. I think I heard the motor going when I awoke the first time; but it was quiet now. We were aground and listing slightly to port. The tide was still going out and dawn was just breaking, slightly cloudy, but already light, twenty minutes to four by the cook's watch as I came by his bunk. We stood about the deck for a short while, but the schooner continued to list to port, toward the cliff, and Charlie [the cook] promptly got on most of his clothes including his oil-skins saying that he'd seen ships like this before and that she was gone for sure. We were listing badly by that time and some water was beginning to show in the commander's room. Dr. Potter's room showed water next, and then it showed a bulging crack. The seams opened up more than a quarter of an inch, and we could hear the water coming in. By that time, most of us had packed clothes into duffel bags and pillow cases and had our cameras ashore.



Inlet to Griffin Bay anchorage.

The tide kept going out, as if there were no end to it. And at the lowest point, we could get aboard the lee side without getting our feet wet.... The port anchor lay three feet up out of the water, caught tight between two large rocks. And before the tide started back, we got the anchor free by unhooking the shackle, prying the anchor loose, and working it back to the end of the chain.

The tide had started back by the time we had finished with it; and as fast as the tide came in, it filled the schooner. We worked rapidly getting food ashore above high tide mark. Most of us never realized the amount of food aboard until we started getting it ashore. Before we started, it was too late to get any of the canned goods out from below the decks. We moved can after can of butter, more than 50 hams, a dozen boxes of pilot crackers, and endless jars and cans of other foods. But we didn't think of the sugar and as it was on the lee side, it was one of the first things to become completely wet, covered over. We took out quite a few things, such as pots and pans, but none of the dishes. The tide came up over the lee rail and the schooner still lay on the bottom. When the port dead-eyes on the main rigging were just under the

edge of the water, the rail made a slow movement as if to rise. When the water had started into the hold, we made some effort to pump, but could get no water because of the list. But when the water level showed that the rail was beginning to rise, that the schooner had a chance to right herself, all hands turned to getting the water out. The deck pumps were working long before the decks could be

stood upon without a support of some kind. And as Angus [Beck] suggested it, I unbuttoned the main hatch and went down into the galley as some of the fellows rigged twenty quart cans onto dory tackles. I stood on the condiment guard at the stern of the table and the water was half way to the top of my boots. She still listed to port so that it was uncomfortable to lean against the wall for support. I took a measure on Spark's radio to be able to tell



R. Mulligan, Bishop's Mitre Shore s. Side Frobisher Bay.

if the water was coming or going. I think it must have been a little after six by then. The pumps had been going for half an hour then, and it seemed ages since we had gotten up.

Everything seemed to float past. First I saw a gillmot egg. Then plant specimens of all kinds. The pepper shaker, upside-down, a glaucus gull, playing cards and books and films and maps.

Spark's chair came floating out of his room. The water rose about four inches on the starboard side as the schooner came to a level position. And then I could see that we were gaining slowly. I took the shirt tail as a marker; it hung from a nail near the ceiling and came just to the water's edge. I yelled that we were gaining rapidly. Levi [Richard Levy] came down and they started another dory tackle hauling with a can. But Levi got wet and Peter Stengel took his place.... I dropped a can and although it stood upright, I couldn't reach it with my hand. And that water was icy cold.... After a couple of hours the captain relieved me and I went on deck and helped with the tackle and the pumps. Everyone was working, going from one job to the next. Charlie made coffee on the after-cabin stove and we each had some. It made us feel considerably better. I think we used the last of the dry sugar. We had eaten only pilot crackers and jam during all the morning and it was nearly ten o'clock... and all the morning was from 3:30 on.

At about eleven, we cast off from the cliff and got the winch motor started and hauled the port anchor. While the tide was starting in, we had swung the MIR-O-MAC off, and we got the port anchor up. We ran a line to the tender through the starboard hawse pipe and gave her full speed to try to back the Thebaud out of the point of water and into the bay before the wind. But the tender was light and for a while lost ground. Then half a dozen boys got on her stern and the extra weight did the trick. All hands turned to on the cable and hauled the lighter anchor with-



Thebaud aground in Griffin Bay.

out the aid of even a tackle. And we backed slowly clear of the point of rocks to which we had made the cable fast more than twelve hours before. We still kept at the pumps and pulled water with the cans.

Through it all, Angus was the only one who insisted that she would float again. But I think that it was only appearance on his part. There seemed no chance at all that she would float again with so much water inside. But when there did seem a chance, the boys worked nobly to get the food and clothes and equipment back onto the deck. Without the crew we had, the Thebaud would never have sailed again.

At shortly after noon, after more than six hours of constant work with the pumps and the auxiliary water removing equipment including buckets and cans etc., those pumps sucked air. If we hadn't been so tired, I think we might have cheered. But we were well under way before the wind, heading for York Sound. We put up the fore-sail, the riding sail, and the jumbo jib, and were making good time. Angus had promised at noon, that he



Thebaud aground in Griffin Bay.

would have the motor going inside of six hours. And with the help of Trapper and Champ, he was working on it as soon as the water level was below the floor. Everything was covered with a coating of oil and grease which made it impossible to stand up without having a rag underfoot. And when the motor started at about 7:30 o'clock, everyone was surprised except Angus. And I think I saw a slight expression of deep satisfaction on his face. He ran the motor slowly until we got here and anchored; but so far as I can find out, it is in very good shape. And there is a possibility that we may yet go on....

Before sea water had decommissioned the ship's radio, MacMillan ordered radioman Walter Ramsten to send an SOS and message that the *Thebaud* was being abandoned, that all hands were safe and making their way via the motor launch and dories to Resolution Island. This appears to be the first and only SOS distress call sent by MacMillan in all his Arctic expeditions. It was never heard. Either the antenna was too close to the cliff or the power source was already too weak before the transmission started.

From MacMillan's journal: I felt no alarm over the situation until someone informed me that the water was coming into my room and also into Dr. Potter's room. Hearing that, I suggested to Jack [Captain Crowell] that it would be a good idea to get some food ashore. The tide was so low that we could now pass it over the rail and right into the arms of the boys on the rocks below.

In his memoirs, Crowell wrote:

Now we were in a serious situation, no doubt about that. However, I had no doubt at that stage that she would float at high tide and we would get clear of the rocks and under way again with little serious damage to the hull. She had not driven ashore; she had touched the ground so easily that we did not feel any shock, and she later laid on her side very gently. There seemed no reason to believe otherwise. The *Bowdoin* had been in similar situations several times and floated without damage.

Then MacMillan leaned over the rail and shouted to me [on shore], "Jack, I think she has bilged herself!" I climbed aboard and went below with him into the hold, which was fitted for quarters for the boys, Adm. MacMillan, and the scientists. The botanist's room was on the port side next to the ceiling (inner planking). Now this ceiling was 2 ½-3" planking. Outboard of that were thick frames, close together, the bones or ribs of the vessel. Outside of that again was 3 inch oak planking. There was no cargo to speak of in this ship, only light partitions and furniture, so no great weight was lying on the boulder that was making this bulge.

Some of the ceiling planks were spreading apart; but the bulge was so pronounced it seemed that the heavy frames and outer planks must be very soft or rotten. Then the mate spoke to me and I followed him on deck. He showed me where the outboard edge of the deck planking had separated from the covering board at the waterways on that low side. At a point abreast of the foremast, I put my hand in the crack up to the length of my fingers and carried my hand so all along the covering board to the main beam (or break poop). The propeller and rudder were out of water during the lowest level of tide. Optimist engineer Angus Beck was soon heard hammering as he straightened a bend in the propeller blade which had occurred when hitting ice several days before at Cape Chidley.

The vessel seemed to be slowly spreading apart as she lay there. Now the tide was beginning to flood and because of the 26-foot range and the fact that these tides are still about six hours, rise and fall, the water rises fast. In an hour or so the water was up around her and rising inside of her as fast as outside. This caught all hands by surprise. Practically no food stores had been taken ashore and now as the men endeavored to do so, the water rose too quickly.

With sea water filling the hold inside as rapidly as the tide rose outside (more than 4½ feet per hour) we had not finished bringing food and stores, including a huge tent, to shore when the schooner came upright and progress noted from pumping and bailing indicated little if any leaking. There was an abrupt turnaround to get everything back on the schooner again. Dorries just filled from the deck to be unloaded with previous loads already on shore were hastily unloaded back onto the deck. Pumping with the two hand pumps and bailing with cans continued as food and stores were first removed from and then returned to the schooner. Mate Hjalmer Johnson worked to fill the crack in the planking. The cook made coffee and distributed

sea biscuits. The students worked as bees around a hive, all in an organized frenzy that accomplished a miracle.

The youngest student on the expedition, fifteen-year-old Robert Perkins, wrote in his diary:

Water began to come onto the botanist's cabin faster and faster. The tide was coming in now, and forced the water through the hole and maybe through the toilets, 'till when I went amid-ship to get my notebook, the water was waist deep, and it was impossible to stand without holding on. We started to unload supplies in the dories, and put the tender overboard to help.... All hands prepared to abandon ship. Captain Jack was losing his first ship. Halford says he was taking it hard as was Angus, who had been with her ever since she was launched. A moment after the power boat went over-



Thebaud aground in Griffin Bay.

board, she began to right. Bucket lines were started in the cabin, thru the main hatch, and in the fore-castle while we all pumped with might and main. Soon we began to gain. I was jumping from job to job, everyone relieving me, tho I did not need it every five minutes. The ship began to rise.... By 12 we had much of the water out of her, and the stove in the after cabin was lit, while Charlie made coffee and cookies were passed out. This work went on until 3 when we were able to up anchors and sail off, the engines were not working of course.

In the forward starboard bunk where I slept, my typewriter, films, clothes, and mattress remained dry and safe, but those who stayed in the midship cabins had little of anything dry. Labels from canned goods washed off. Sugar and salt in bags were slush. Many films and cameras were damaged or destroyed by salt and water or oily bilge. MacMillan's extensive Arctic library was wet and oil stained. But each made the best of it; we were safe and secure again and no one complained.

MacMillan described the final successful

moments in his journal:

The cook had returned aboard with his pots and pans from the head of the cove where there were two dories loaded.

We began re-loading all of our provisions and personal equipment. Gradually the *Thebaud* came out of the water to her water line. The pumps sucked. We were ready for the sea.

With no engine it was a problem just how to get her away from the cliff and down the bay, for the wind was blowing against the rocks. Our only hope was in the power boat. I took six men with me and placed them on the stern. We pulled as hard as we could. The *Thebaud* began to move backward — toward her kedge. When clear of the cliff, we slipped under the bowsprit and turned her around and pointed her down the bay. We set the jumbo, fore-sail and tri-sail and headed east for our old anchorage at Sandy Bay, glad to be out of a bad mess.

My diary went into considerable detail on the recovery process from drying out to catching Arctic char:



Drying out gear, etc., after sinking.

July 31, 1937, 4 pm

Gertrude L. Thebaud, York Sound (or Jackman's, there seems to be some argument) Baffin Land, Northwest Territories.

While the schooner lay on her side at low tide in Griffin Bay we could see the damage which had been done her bottom when we hit the rock the day before. The false keel well below the bob-stay was broken out for about a foot all the way to the planking. But it still didn't leak.

At about four

o'clock, Charlie rang the supper bell. Somehow he had bailed out the water from the cook stove and got it going... filled it with coal that was half sugar syrup, and which stunk as it started burning, and had the first meal of the day for us. Baked beans out of cans, brown bread, hot biscuits (none of our flour got wet as it is stored well up in the bow). And he had cake and cocoa and coffee and tea. That meal surely hit the right place. There was cold ham with it too, but the rest was hot; and after having gone since the night before with only occasionally pilot crackers, some with and some without any jam or butter, a real meal tasted fine.

I think we came into the harbor here about nine o'clock, but I am not sure of the time as I find that many of my time conceptions of yesterday are way off. But we are already sorting wet from dry, cleaning up the floors, and throwing away the litter. And some of those who had dry bunks turned in for sleep, the first in a long time. I tried to sleep; but after half an hour, I awoke and went on deck again. We gave dry blankets and mattresses to those who had everything wet. We tried to cover the half-wet and all wet clothes which lay around the deck with canvas. We picked up stray pieces of soaked clothes and lay them in a soggy pile. We made barrels fast that had been untied when we were on side back in Griffin Bay, and we went to bed very tired....

The decks, dories, and canoes were littered with books, papers, and magazines. Sugar lay on a canvas, bags and bags, soaked with salt water. Some was thrown into the sea. Some was put into



Russell Welch with Arctic Char.

cans of water and made into syrup in an effort to keep it. The water tanks could have taken in only a very small amount of water if any. The water tastes only slightly of salt. The fuel, except a small amount which was lost at first, was saved and in good shape, no water in it at all. Mr. Johnson worked with caulking and paint and canvas trying to make the cracks on the deck waterproof. Angus, helped by Trapper and Champ, put the rest of the oil from drums into the tanks, making considerably more room for drying. Frank and Russ and I took a net near shore and set it on the rising tide. We took some of the Commander's clothes ashore and spread them out on the rocks to dry. Those of us who had films left dry took pictures. I took a whole film and part of another one. And Charlie came through with a fine dinner as usual. The sugar was wet and the salt had been dried on the stove, but we didn't mind that much. After dinner, Russ, Winter and I went over to look at the net. No fish in it, but we drove in 13 after successive tries by splashing with the oars and brought them



Walter Staples on *Thebaud*, 1937.

back to the schooner. Then we helped get the tender aboard. Heavy work. Charlie and the Commander are telling stories in the fore-castle.

The expedition could have ended there, where it had hardly begun. Captain Crowell wrote of decision making:

As master of the vessel with the responsibility of the ship and lives aboard, my duty, as I saw it, was to get both back to Gloucester, or at least, some port where the vessel could be hauled out and personnel safe. So, I was first amazed when Adm. MacMillan took me aside and said, "Jack, I have promised to take these people up to the Arctic Circle." As I recall, I gave no answer at the time.

We laid at anchorage for perhaps two days as discussions and immediate planning continued. The radio man, with the help of others, manufactured a jury-rigged radio listening device, enabling him to monitor radio traffic to a certain extent; but nothing was heard [regarding our situation].

The ship itself was not leaking! She had evidently come together at the seams after being water borne following the accident. The chief engineer had worked wonders, it seemed to me, to get his department functioning again. On deck, the ship showed signs of her ordeal. The port rail, just forward of the break at the main-beam had a deep sag, very abrupt. The rupture of parting of the deck planks from the sheer planks that I described earlier had disappeared, practically. Spars, standing rigging, chain plates,

etc., seemed as usual.... After further talk with Adm. MacMillan, I agreed to attempt to take the vessel toward the Arctic Circle, but to enter no ice fields and to turn about and head South upon the onset of bad weather.

At Savage Island near Resolution Island MacMillan wrote in his journal:

With the help of John Halford and Peter Stengel, our radio operator got in touch with Resolution Island. They did not hear the S.O.S. sent out on the morning of the 30th and had received no inquiries as to our safety or where-a-bouts. We told them where we were and what we intended to do, namely that we were going over to Brewster Point. I sent that station at Resolution Island a message to Gene (our Bowdoin College contact) stating that our radio was out of order and that we were unable to keep our schedule.

We did indeed cross Frobisher Bay to Brewster Point where we spent a week exploring, hunting, fishing, and in contact with a small group of natives with whom MacMillan had

visited six years before. Finding the *Thebaud* apparently seaworthy, Captain Crowell then sailed the schooner to a point near or at the Arctic Circle before turning South for the return trip.

The grounding of the *Thebaud* in what was thought to be Griffin Bay on the south shore of Frobisher Bay on the night of July 30, 1937, appeared to be the result of several factors. The rising tide for four hours after anchoring may have dragged the port anchor and starboard kedge anchor. The falling tide with a slight on-shore breeze and swirling tide eddies would have allowed the ship to move closer to the cliff (the anchor chain and cables were not tightened during this period). The reported twenty-eight foot drop in tide then grounded the stern and the bow swung around broadside to the cliff until it came against the rounded rock which eventually limited the list.



Walter Staples. Photograph by Tom Eastman, Mountain Ear Photo.

We were a young and inexperienced group of adventurers. We were learning by doing under the guidance and leadership of experienced seamen. It is possible that had one of the experienced seamen been on watch that night, we might have avoided the most memorable experiences of our lives.



1937 MacMillan Arctic Expedition Personnel

Scientific Staff

Commander Donald B. MacMillan, Provincetown, Mass.

Captain John W. Crowell, Isle au Haut, Maine

Botany: Dr. David Potter, Clark University, Worcester, Mass.

Min. & Geology: Dr. Martin J. Buerger, Mass. Institute of Technology

Zoology: Mr. V. B. Wynne-Edwards, McGill University, Montreal

Waterfowl Investigator: Mr. Harold Peters, Biological Survey, Washington, D.C.

Collector-Taxidermist: Mr. J. R. Forbes, Stamford, Connecticut

Surgeon: Dr. Kenneth W. Sewell, Mass. Memorial

Hospital, Boston, Mass.

Radio: Mr. W. H. Ramsten, Rock Island, Illinois

Crew

Mate: Hjalmer Johnson, Gloucester, Mass.

Able Seaman: Frank Ellis, Gloucester, Mass.

Engineer: Angus Beck, Gloucester, Mass.

Cook: Charles Hatcher, Gloucester, Mass.

Messman: Pious Farrell, Bay d'North, Fortune Bay, Newfoundland

Students

W. Streeter Bass, Jr. Wilton, Maine

Charles P. Edwards, Milton, Mass.

John Endicott, Worcester, Mass.

Harold B. Evans, Newton Highlands, Mass.
 Richard W. French, Seymour, Connecticut
 Philip J. Haigis, Foxboro, Mass.
 Paul W. Haines, Jr. San Francisco, California
 John H. Halford, Jr., Norristown, Pennsylvania
 Robert C. Howard, Brockton, Mass.
 Richard Levy, Brookline, Mass.
 Robert R. Mulligan, Pawtucket, Rhode Island
 Willis M. Partridge Jr., Brockton, Mass.
 Robert W. Perkins, Boston, Mass.

Brendon Phibbs, Winnetka, Illinois
 William S. Sherman, Loudenville, New York
 Ivan Spear, Cape Elizabeth, Maine
 Walter S. Staples, Eliot, Maine
 Douglas R. Starrett, Athol, Mass.
 Peter D. Stengel, Belmont, Mass.
 Amos J. Shaler, New York, New York
 Elliston P. Walker, Ardmore, Pennsylvania
 Russell Welch, Wyckoff, New Jersey
 Wilfred Winter, Wrentham, Mass.

NOTES

1. Quotes from Captain Crowell's journal were provided by Jay Hanna, from a copy presented to him by Captain Crowell.
2. Quotes from the *Thebaud* log were copied from the log

which I had located in the possession of Rae Hatch, a friend of Ben Pine (owner of the *Thebaud* at the time), and convinced to donate it to Bowdoin College.

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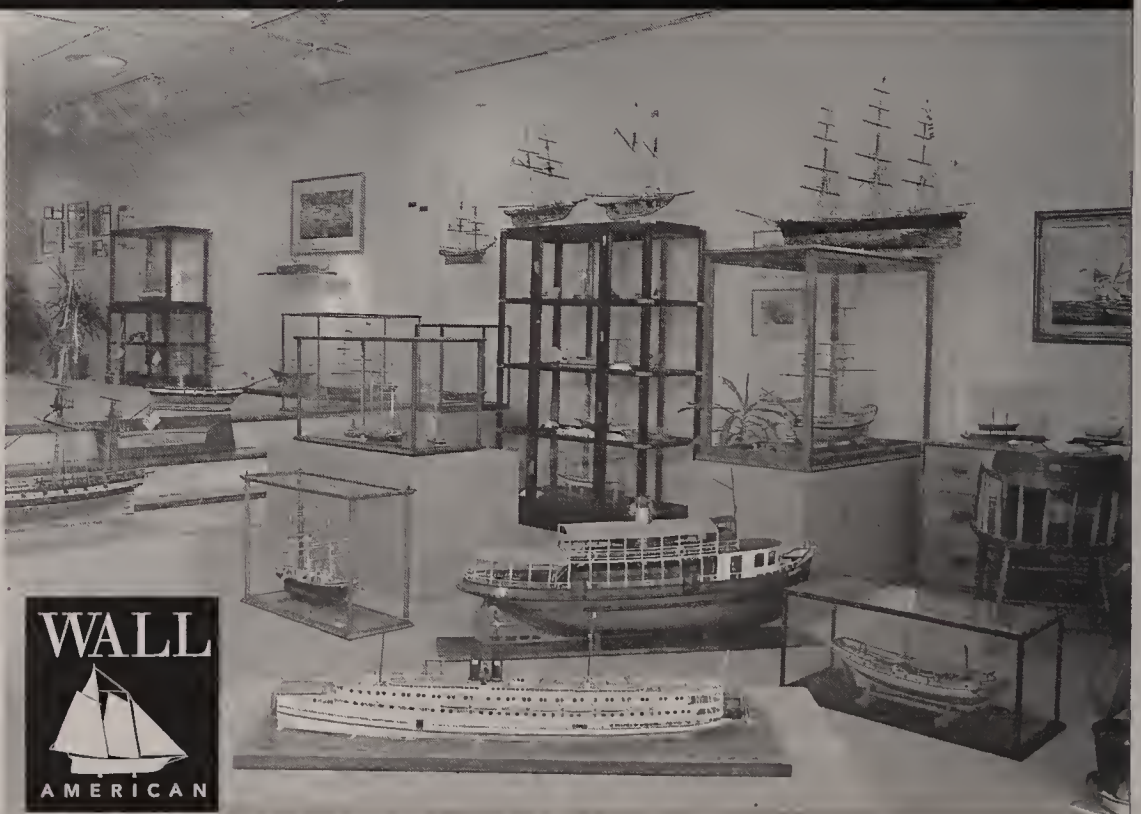
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MARSALA: THE TRIBULATIONS OF A SHIP, HER CAPTAIN, AND HIS GOVERNMENT

ART UNGERLEIDER

“The winds blew fiercely, and I can still hear the noise, the screeching sounds of the five masts ripping off, one at a time. My husband, the captain, and I, along with several cadets huddled scared in the donkey engine room — expecting the old ship to capsize.” The voice comes from a frail, elderly woman. Her eyes widen as she speaks of a disastrous ocean cruise that began as a teaching program for future merchant marine officers. She is the widow of Oliver Bohld, a Bostonian who founded the American Nautical Academy.

The ship, a barkentine named *Marsala*, served as the academy’s classroom and campus. Mrs. Bohld was a member of the school’s board of directors.

In the fall of 1938, sailing from New York, the vessel confronted a hurricane off Virginia.

Art Ungerleider has spent most of his life living either on the water or in dwellings not too far from a river or an ocean. His boyhood home, Bordentown, New Jersey, overlooked the confluence of two tributaries: Crosswicks and Black’s creeks. His experiences include being a Merchant Marine cadet, a sailor aboard two Coast Guard cutters during World War II, a newspaper and radio writer, a sales manager, and the founder of a specialty construction business.

His writing efforts have had the support of his wife, Eleanor, and their twelve children. Author of a sailing ship’s history and eight short fiction stories, he has now completed two novels that he began before his retirement. Currently he is a sailing enthusiast and an avid birdwatcher. Those avocations led him to write a story about the Australian penguins which was published in a regional newsletter of the Audubon Society. He has also written several newspaper columns about waterfront activities along the Potomac River.

She did not have a radio transmitter. Fortunately, a steamship, the *SS Savannah*, also caught in the storm, sighted the floundering hull, and radioed her position to the Coast Guard in Norfolk. The cutter *Mendota* towed the school ship to the safety of Hampton Roads.

A year earlier, shortly after I entered high school, a bulletin board notice gave details about a new merchant marine training school. The American Nautical Academy offered three courses: an introductory correspondence course, a summer cadet curriculum, and a senior program. Graduates of the senior program would be trained for a third officer’s license. I enrolled in the correspondence course. Because of my high marks, I received a three-week summer cadet scholarship. In my biography I wrote that I belonged to a drum and bugle corps. The academy gave me another three weeks for agreeing to be the ship’s bugler.

In June 1937 my parents drove me to Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn, where the *Marsala* docked. A big, red-faced man came down her gangway. He wore an officer’s uniform — his white shirt had epaulets on the shoulders, and his cap had gold leaf on its visor. He walked to my father’s side of our car. Mom, seated next to Dad, waved a small fan. The heat quivered above the dock’s paving. An American flag hung limply from the ship’s stern.

“The young man in the back must be your son, Arthur. Am I right?” With a commanding presence he looked down at my parents. His eyes appeared the size of a horse’s because his turquoise-framed glasses had thick lenses. “I’m Captain Bohld, Oliver Bohld.”

My father stepped out and offered his hand. Captain Bohld shook it firmly once. Grinning, he



Marsala, December 1938. Courtesy of The Mariners' Museum, Newport News, Virginia.

tipped his cap to my mom. "You must be this future merchant marine officer's mother?" Mom smiled and nodded.

The captain looked straight at me. "I hope your lip is strong, Arthur. You will call us to evening chow and wake us in the morning with your bugle." I squeezed my bugle's mouthpiece with my left hand.

"Well folks," said the captain, "today all of the cadets are reporting. We're busy. So, why don't you say goodbye to this lad and I'll muster him. When he returns home, you'll be seeing a man." He laughed loudly. "Okay, Arthur, let's go aboard." I followed him. Turning briefly to wave goodbye, I tripped at the gangplank. "Pick up your goddamn feet, cadet, and hurry!" My boyhood disappeared.

Aboard, Bohld summoned a young officer. "Get this man his uniform and other gear; have him change, and box those civilian garments for mailing home."

After receiving my uniform and a hammock,

I changed into dungarees and a blue chambray shirt. I received the ship's bugle, an old, battered, unpolished horn. The young officer, who told me to call him Mr. Morgan, said I could tour the ship, except the Captain's quarters. He added I should rehearse bugling before evening chow. I found a towel to muffle the horn's sound while I practiced.

Going topside I watched all the tugs, barges, and fishing boats riding or at anchor on Sheepshead Bay until Mr. Morgan ordered me to go forward and summon the other cadets to eat. Nervously, I played *Come and Get Your Chow Chow*, and my new classmates began running to the ladder leading to the mess deck. We were served stew on rice, and a slice of canned pineapple for dessert. Being hungry, everything tasted good despite the unappetizing appearance of the stew.

After our first meal, Captain Bohld spoke to the corps on the quarterdeck. He opened with an official welcome and followed with comments on

the importance of following orders. His ebullience crested with a red face as his fist-pounding rage peaked with a certainty. "Expect punishment for even the smallest infraction of the ship's rules." Our eyes sought the faces of those about us. No smiles.

Regaining his composure, Captain Bohld switched to a short history of the *Marsala*. The barkentine, he said, originally belonged to the Royal Italian Navy. She didn't have an engine because the Italians, like him, believed traveling only by sail power trains men to be skillful and decisive. He added, "Wooden ships but iron men, you know," and then laughed heartily at his own remark.

Sailors sometimes use hyperbole to increase interest in their stories. I learned that Captain Bohld also embellished his narratives. The true history of the 284-foot *Marsala* reveals she was constructed in 1919 at the International Shipbuilding yards in Pascagoula, Mississippi. The shipyard owners were two Italian immigrants, Henry Piaggio and Ricardo Gualino. After a long period of success, the company suffered through a crippling strike. The partners argued and the business faltered.

Six ships sat on the ways when the shipyard reached financial bottom. The City of Vicksburg Ship Company of Gulfport, Mississippi bought one of them, the *Marsala*. She began carrying freight between the United States and South America. Her ownership changed several times, and in 1932 Oliver Bohld purchased the vessel for his new school, The American Nautical Academy, the National Training School for Merchant Marine Officers.

On my fifth day aboard, a tugboat tied to the *Marsala*. We retrieved our mooring lines, and the tug guided us into Ambrose Channel. At dusk we reached Raritan Bay. Midway between Perth Amboy, New Jersey, and Tottenville, Staten Island, we dropped anchor. The tug captain waved goodbye.

The next day eight of us reported for rowing instruction. The captain, who would be our teacher, came from his quarters looking as though he had slept very little the night before. He motioned us to board the whaleboat floating alongside.

Captain Bohld stood at the tiller. After lecturing on rowing in unison, he changed places with a cadet sitting on the first thwart. Gripping an oar, he said, "When you row, don't be at odds with the wind. Feather your oar as you return it to the stroke position." He bent his wrists so that the oar blade moved horizontal to the water's surface. "Keep the oar above the water. Catching it in a wave is called *crabbing* — the sign of an amateur." We pulled a few strokes slowly before he increased the cadence.

After five minutes, my oar caught a crab. The boat veered. "Arthur, pay attention. See the steering problem you caused?" Ten more minutes passed. The wind increased, heightening the waves. I tired and caught another crab. Red-faced, the captain pointed his free hand at me. "THROW THAT NOVICE OUT OF THIS BOAT SO THAT WE CAN COMPLETE THIS LESSON WITHOUT BUMBLING!" Rowing ceased. A few muffled giggles broke the silence. No one moved. "THAT WAS AN ORDER! YOU TWO!" he pointed to the two cadets on the thwart ahead of me. "TOSS THAT DUMB BUNNY OVER!" The pair arose with bewilderment on their faces. One made a grab for my arm. I averted him and jumped into the water.

Captain Bohld ordered the cadets to resume rowing while I tread water. I tried to smile but, though I was a good swimmer, the discipline scared me. The boat didn't go too far because the captain held the tiller in a turning position. Finally, he ordered me to climb aboard the boat and admonished, "Don't ever catch a crab again." I don't think I ever did.

Returning to the ship, my friend, Fred Thomas, who was not in the rowing party, noticed my wet clothing. "What happened to you?"

We went below where I could change. I told him about the captain's anger and my punishment. Fred often spoke of his dissatisfaction with the captain. His comment on this situation was laced with expletives. Going topside, we came face to face with Captain Bohld. His stare felt piercing. We stood at attention. Our conversation halted until the skipper walked to the quarterdeck. We knew he had heard the unfavorable remarks.

Our days were busy with classes, boat drills, furling and unfurling sails, scraping and painting.



Marsala. Deck view showing wreckage, December 1938. Courtesy of The Mariners' Museum, Newport News, Virginia.

All cadets, including this bugler, had to stand night watches. The duty hours after midnight were the most difficult because our bodies kept signaling it was a time for sleep.

A week after the rowing episode, Fred had the first watch, midnight to four. Captain Bohld and his wife returned to the ship at 0200. He noticed Fred asleep and slumped in a chair next to the ship's log table. Kicking the cadet's feet, he ordered Fred to get another cadet to relieve him. When the relief arrived, the captain yelled, "Thomas... immediately lay below. Present yourself at 0800 in dress uniform on the quarter-deck for a court martial!"

Speaking with enough decibels to carry his voice beyond the bowsprit, the captain lectured us on the need for discipline aboard a ship: "It could," he said, "mean the difference in your very survival." After an interminable amount of time, he focused on Fred personally.

"Your dereliction was not only an infraction of the basic rules of ships' discipline, but you're a potential cause of death to your fellow men. Therefore, it is necessary for me to dismiss you from this academy with a dishonorable discharge. Upon the close of this court you will gather all your personal belongings, and I will order a crewman to put you ashore. Do not speak to anyone during your remaining time on this vessel."

As a symbol of disgrace, Captain Bohld cut the stitches on Fred's uniform and ripped the sleeves away. As the cloth lay on the deck, the captain barked, "Corps dismissed. Begin your assignments."

Fred made an appeal. "Sir, I have no money. How will I get home?"

"Getting home is your problem. We are no longer responsible for you."

Fred went below to get his gear and I followed. We shook hands in silence. I never saw him again.

Life aboard the *Marsala* became repressive. The food, judged by appearance, smell or quality, served only as basic nourishment. Discipline tightened. Our captain appeared mentally wounded by his own actions. He became grumpy, seldom conversing with the cadets. The corps took on a sullen facade. The court ceremony

plagued my mind. I wrote to my parents, stating I would be glad when my training ended.

A week later I noticed a rowboat approaching from the direction of Perth Amboy. I recognized the rower's short, powerful strokes. My father tied the boat to the *Marsala* as Captain Bohld walked to meet him. The greeting had a note of surliness. "Sir, what do you want coming aboard my ship?"

My father had been raised in an environment where displeasure between men often was settled by fist fighting. He could never accept any act of discourtesy. He owned a short fuse.

Jamming one of his forefingers into Captain Bohld's chest, he replied, "I am here to take my son home! Immediately!"

Before I could say goodbye to my friends, I was in the rowboat my father had rented. Some of the cadets waved as they stood at the ship's railing. I could see the captain heading toward his quarters.

Before I returned to high school classes a Navy lieutenant visited my home. He wanted to discuss my experience with the American Nautical Academy because, he said, the Navy had information that Navy commissions were being promised to the students. My reply: Captain Bohld had announced that the cadets who completed the four-year academy course would be eligible to become Navy reserve ensigns.

The following week an inspector from the US Post Office Department visited. His mission — to learn how Bohld used the mails to recruit cadets. I stated I never found anything misleading in the academy's correspondence. A third investigator, an FBI agent, interrogated me with similar questions. After his departure I did not hear about the *Marsala* for several months.

Late November 1938 brought me a newspaper article which described the Coast Guard's rescue of the *Marsala*.

In 1990 I found Captain Bohld's widow living in Lexington, Massachusetts. She granted me an interview. Here, paraphrased, she continues her recall of the *Marsala*'s struggle in the hurricane:

Rolling violently in thirty-foot waves, the



Marsala anchored on the James River, off Claremont Plantation, Virginia, 1990. Courtesy of The Mariners' Museum, Newport News, Virginia.

barkentine's foremast snapped fifteen feet above the main deck. The toppled section fell into the ocean, next to the ship's hull, with its lines still tangled to the mast's stump. Earlier, the other four masts had broken, falling free — flotsam. In the darkness, the rest of the crew and many cadets struggled to keep their bodies from sliding out of control across their sleeping quarters below. Most were nauseated. This storm changed a training cruise into a nightmare. We knew that only the storm's passing, or an unsolicited rescue, could save us.

Captain Bohld dismissed the cadets in the safety of Norfolk's harbor and began plans to repair his floating academy. The Coast Guard reported to the Federal Communications Commission that the *Marsala* had put to sea without a transmitter. On March 27, 1939, the commission

fined the academy \$5,500.

Captain Bohld tried to mitigate the penalty, arguing the Communications Act of 1934 did not specify that sailing vessels had to have transmitters when at sea.

Bohld had the hull towed to a less expensive anchorage in the James River, near Claremont, Virginia. *The Richmond Times-Dispatch* reported on October 20, 1939, that the captain said he planned to resume the academy's schedule in the summer. New masts were on order. Again, he romanticized that he had purchased the *Marsala* from the Italian Navy. However, Lloyds of London Register lists the ship as having been under the United States Flag since her launching.

The academy's founder and his wife divided their time between living aboard and their Boston residence. The captain, to cover his living expenses, found employment as a writer for *The Civil Service Reporter*, a trade newspaper.

In September 1939 the Admiralty Court in

Norfolk appointed the Honorable Luther B. Way to preside over the adjudication of the academy's \$5,500 fine. He decided in March 1940 to maintain the respondent's guilt but reduce the penalty to \$3,000. He also permitted three claimants, who had supplied towing service, lumber and plumbing supplies to the ship, to submit invoices totaling \$587.84. Captain Bohld could not pay the fine, and Judge Way instructed the federal marshal to sell the *Marsala* at public auction.

The marshal allowed Bohld and his wife to live aboard until the auction date. An ideal *quid pro quo* developed; Bohld wanted to stay with his ship, and the government needed a security guard. But Bohld could be testy. He billed the government \$314 for his services as watchman. Payment was denied.

The auction took place on April 3, 1940. A Mrs. Florence M. Ward, a Boston friend of Bohld, tendered \$610. Being the lone bidder, she became the owner of the barkentine. After deducting the costs of court, the judge proportionately divided the remaining money among the three vendor claimants.

Mrs. Ward transferred the *Marsala*'s title back to Bohld for "one dollar and other considerations." Later, a Maritime Administration lawyer wrote in an internal letter, "Mrs. Ward is a front" for Oliver Bohld.

Several cadets, who were aboard the ship when the hurricane struck, left the academy embittered. They wrote to their political representatives and granted interviews to newspapermen. Their complaints influenced Congress to investigate private maritime training schools, particularly The American Nautical Academy. A proposed law, H.R. 9262, would have added more federal controls over this type of specialty education. It did not pass. Staff members unofficially reported that sailing associations, which feared it would become a burden for their training programs, successfully lobbied against the legislative measure.

During World War II the War Shipping Administration (WSA) appropriated idle ships to meet military maritime requirements. *Marsala* rode at anchor in the James River. The WSA

contracted the Isbrandtsen Steamship Company to evaluate the ship. The company recommended that the hull be converted into an ocean going barge. On June 7, 1942, the government decided to acquire her through a bare boat rental with an option to purchase.

Captain Bohld, hearing the government's intention, sent a *collect* telegram to the WSA on July 1, 1942, warning the *Marsala* was not an "idle" ship. He stated the barkentine's schedule included use as a summer camp until September 1, after which she was chartered to be a floating barracks, providing emergency housing for two hundred fifty defense workers in Newport News. He protested that the WSA acquisition would force him to cancel all of these commitments. The government ignored his wire and took possession.

On the same date as Bohld's protest wire, the Maintenance and Repair Division of the Maritime Administration submitted a report to the WSA that concluded "It is our recommendation that this vessel [*Marsala*] be disposed of, and no further action taken."

Adding to the acquisition confusion, the Navy's amphibious training group at Little Creek, Virginia, which originally sought the barkentine, now decided it did not want her. The WSA reversed itself, informing Bohld that it planned to redeliver the hull to him. Correspondence accelerated. Bohld was to get his ship back, but without any provision that he would be compensated for the time it was under government control. All of the action concerning the *Marsala* took place on paper. Before the end of the first summer of the war, the Navy renewed its desire to have possession of the hull. The WSA rescinded its decision to give the ship back to Bohld and she became Navy property on August 22, 1942.

Meanwhile, D. S. Brierley, director of maintenance and repairs for the Maritime Administration, wrote an evaluation of the *Marsala*, estimating her hull to be worth \$33,600.

The Navy renamed the *Marsala*, YAG-17. She went on duty as an attack transport simulator after the refurbishing of her crew's quarters and the addition of cargo booms. Bohld, so far, had received no payments for its acquisition. Believing he deserved some remuneration, he sought the support of Massachusetts Senator David I. Walsh.

The senator contacted Rear Admiral Emory Land, WSA director, for information about the *Marsala's* purchase. The admiral replied that the WSA had requested the original title from Bohld. Bohld contended he never received the request. WSA countered that a registered letter to Bohld came back stamped "unable to deliver." Bohld replied he had not changed his address and that WSA staff members were well aware of his Boston and Washington addresses because he had spoken to them personally. Bohld's correct address did appear on the government's register of ships' titles.

Admiral Land asked T. M. Torrey, his director of large vessel procurement, to report with a price for the barkentine. Torrey's answer contained a gratuitous paragraph that probably influenced the pricing decision. He gave a partial history of the *Marsala*, beginning with the American Nautical Academy's ownership, and covering her foundering at sea and the subsequent rescue. He brought attention to the ship's auction purchase by Mrs. Ward, and the conveyance of title back to Bohld. Torrey editorialized that Bohld had a "shady reputation." His report continued, "in view of this, set \$50 for the charter hire rate and \$950 as the purchase price."

At the end of 1942 the government offered Torrey's prices. The letter, sent to Bohld's Boston address, requested a speedy acceptance or rejection. If Bohld decided to reject the offer, the government said it would pay seventy-five percent of its offered amounts and hold the remainder until Bohld appealed for court decision.

Six months after the monetary settlement letter was sent, Bohld wired Torrey, complaining that he had not received the promised partial payment. He called the federal offer "preposterous." The same day he also sent a telegram to Torrey protesting that scrap iron and sails, removed from the *Marsala* during the government's takeover, had a value greater than the offered price. He listed the retrieved metal as being worth more than \$5,000, and the new sails "also worth at least \$5,000." He did not get a response.

Anchored five miles off shore from the Amphibious Training Center in Little Creek the former *Marsala* served with success. But on September 26, 1944, another hurricane struck. All

personnel disembarked to the shore base. Dragging her anchor, the transport simulator tore a hole in her bottom as she scraped over a reef, and sank. A salvage crew implemented pumps and floated her, but the *YAG-17* could not stabilize without the support system. The Navy moved the battered hull to a Norfolk dock. Decommissioning and scrapping orders followed.

Oliver Bohld became editor-in-chief of the *Civil Service Reporter*. The maritime training school founder and newspaper editor served as a dispatcher at the Army's Transport Service Station in Boston during World War II. He continued to seek compensation for his ship. In 1950, he entered a suit in the Court of Appeals. US Solicitor Paul D. Page Jr. became involved in the litigation. He wrote to Assistant Attorney General H. G. Morison (stat), urging a review of the records. He proposed that "Oliver Bohld be compensated in the amount of \$1,615.88."

Oliver Bohld died suddenly on March 21, 1968, while mailing his civil service newspapers. His death brought to an end the turbulent history of the five-masted barkentine *Marsala*.



Art Ungerleider

MODELER'S NOTES

PAUL DUSTIN

NEWS FROM THE PENOBSCOT MARINE MUSEUM, SEARSPORT, MAINE

Those model makers who attended the Charlestown, Massachusetts, annual meeting of The Nautical Research Guild in October 1997 may remember the entertaining talk given by John Stobart following the last evening's dinner. In his remarks John Stobart talked about his life as an artist and showed slides of some of his paintings. Now we will have the opportunity to see a major exhibition of his works, in a venue of that is itself a major maritime museum.

Word has been received from the Penobscot Marine Museum that they plan a John Stobart

exhibition for the summer of 2000. Excerpting from their announcement I note the following:

The Penobscot Marine Museum will feature the work of acclaimed marine artist John Stobart in a special exhibition of oils from July 2–October 1, 2000. The show, "Port and Passages," will present the best of John Stobart's works, many of which will be on loan from private collections. Stobart presents a unique perspective and an accurate eye for the history, time, and place of his paintings. Museum Director Renny Stackpole stated, "We are thrilled to have this special show of John Stobart as the centerpiece of our year 2000 programming. It marks a unique opportunity to show a pre-eminent living artist with a strong understanding of maritime history and a body of work that depicts the art and life of another era — the era of our great sailing vessels." John



Detroit: A View of the City from the Canadian Shore, ca. 1838, by John Stobart. Courtesy of The Penobscot Marine Museum

Stobart was born in 1929 in Leicester, England, and now lives in Westport, Massachusetts. Some of Stobart's paintings are in the collections of the Peabody Essex Museum.

The Penobscot Marine Museum is located in the picturesque town of Searsport, Maine, a short distance north of Camden. It is housed in thirteen buildings, including eight that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and focuses upon the maritime history of Maine, particularly the Penobscot Bay region. Their collections include paintings, models, and other marine artifacts. Paintings by Thomas and James Buttersworth are one of the largest collections in the country. Other well known artists include Robert Salmon, Antonio Jacobsen and Frederic Cozzens. Of particular interest, as well, are the objects which depict the region's maritime history heritage. These include sea captains' homes, a collection of shipwright tools and builders' path models, and furniture and artifacts brought back from overseas. Shipboard life is preserved in histories and photographs of Searsport captains, stories by crew members, and a collection of shipboard furnishings and other memorabilia. The museum also houses the Stephen Phillips Memorial Library which incidentally shares the same name with the Peabody Essex's Phillips Library. These two libraries commemorate the heritage of the Phillips family in both Salem, Massachusetts, and the Searsport area. If you visit Maine next summer, plan to stop by and see the Stobart exhibit as well as the museum.

PUBLICATION OF *LETTERS FROM SEA, 1882-1901: JOANNA AND LINCOLN COLCORD'S SEAFARING CHILDHOOD.*

A recent publication of the Penobscot Marine Museum jointly with Tilbury House, Publishers, is the book *Letters From Sea, 1882-1901: Joanna and Lincoln Colcord's Seafaring Childhood* by Parker Bishop Albee Jr., professor of history at the University of Southern Maine.

The following synopsis is from material

provided to me by the museum staff. In June 1881 on the day of their wedding, Captain Lincoln Alden Colcord (1857-1913) and Jane Sweetser Colcord (1859-1939) departed for sea. Their children, Joanna Carver (1882-1960) and Lincoln Ross (1883-1947) were born at sea and spent their youth aboard their father's ship. It was not until their late teens that the children went ashore for formal education. Joanna became a teacher and social worker, and compiled a collection of sea chanteys and later a maritime lexicon. Lincoln became a successful writer of sea fiction and maritime history. Lincoln Ross Colcord was instrumental in the founding of the Penobscot Marine Museum in 1936. He served as a founding trustee and secretary to the museum for many years. The Colcord letters to family members ashore, their logbooks, photographs, and later correspondence give us a splendid window into the life of a seafaring family. Contributors to the book include the museum and the captain's grandson Brooks Colcord. In particular, the letters and photographs fare from Brooks Colcord's personal collection.

It should be noted that Lincoln Colcord instigated the development of what is now known as *The American Neptune*.

**YEAR 2000 SHIP MODEL
CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITIONS**

*The Mariner's Museum
Newport News, Virginia*

Next year promises to be an interesting one for ship modelers. Thus far two major conferences and exhibitions have been announced. Of these, the first is one which has been held every five years by The Mariner's Museum in Newport News, Virginia. Next year the "2000 Scale Ship Model Competition and Exhibition" will be the fifth such competition sponsored by the museum. Entries will be accepted in three divisions: scratch built, semi-scratch built, and kit-built for sailing ships, powered ships, and small craft. Models must be delivered to the museum during the month of April 2000 and will be on display

from 17 June until 28 October 2000. Incidentally, the exhibition opens concurrently with the tall ships gathering of "Op Sail 200™" in Hampton Roads, Virginia. Information and entry material can be obtained from The Mariner's Museum, Newport News, 100 Museum Drive, VA 23606-3759.

***Ship Modelers' Association
Culver City, California***

The second exhibition will be "2000 Western Ship Model Conference and Exhibit," which is to be hosted by the Ship Modelers' Association (SMA) of Southern California. The conference will be held from 31 March to 2 April 2000 on board the RMS Queen Mary, which is permanently berthed at Long Beach, California. Technical sessions will be held on Friday afternoon and all day Saturday. Subjects will include "Ship Models as Sources of Research Information" by David Roberts, "POW Bone Models" by Jonathan

Tatlow, "Steam Whale Catchers in Peace and War" by John Harland, "Building a Model of the 1859 Chattahoochee River Steamer *Lowell*" by John Fryant, "Archaeology as a Research Source" by Kevin Crisman, and "Historical Research Related to Construction of Ship Models and Replica Ships" by Les Bolton. The speaker following the banquet on Saturday night will be Richard Kelton, explorer, racer, navigator, and ship Model collector, whose subject will be "Ship Models From a Collector's Point of View." Concurrent with the conference will be an exhibition of ship models which is expected to draw almost three hundred models. The conference will conclude on Sunday, April 2, with a round table discussion, including modeling techniques by Saturday's speakers. Information regarding the conference may be obtained by telephone from Registrar Monica Chaban at (310) 216-7885 or by e-mail at conf@shipmodelers-assn.org.



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Museum Focus

CHICAGO MARITIME SOCIETY

The Chicago Maritime Society was founded in 1982 to research, educate, and celebrate Chicago's maritime heritage. The Society features travel and commerce on the Great Lakes, Chicago as a port city, and the inland water ways and canals of the Middle West.

The Society is housed on the sixth floor of the Helix Building at 310 S. Racine. It maintains a collection of maritime artifacts, offers programs, promotes research on maritime subjects, and sponsors community activities.

Among the Society projects are:

- Exhibits and displays
- Library and archives: artifacts, objects, artwork, books, periodicals, photographs, and documents for study and research
- Lectures and classes
- Maritime workshops
- Publications to present current news and historic interpretation on maritime subjects
- The Chicago Maritime Festival
- The senior contest featuring maritime history
- Small watercraft building, restoration, and handling

Society membership is open to all with interests in the history and continuing maritime concerns of Chicago, the Great Lakes, and inland waterways.

Chicago Maritime Society
310 S. Racine
Chicago, Illinois 60607
(312) 421-9096

THE HISTORIC DOCKYARD CHATHAM, KENT, ENGLAND

The Historic Dockyard is the most complete Georgian dockyard in the world. It has built many of Britain's most famous fighting ships, including Nelson's flag ship, *Victory*. Although you may no longer hear the sound of giant handsaws tearing through the toughest English Oak and the "clang" of hammer on iron-plate in the Wooden Walls gallery, the legacy of ship-building can still be felt and seen throughout the award-winning museum galleries and attractions of The Historic Dockyard. Today, within an hour's drive of central London, the Historic Dockyard is still busy.

You can observe the greatest concentration of historic monuments in Britain, marvel at the sights, sounds, and smells of the Wooden Walls gallery, where you see the twenty-six different trades involved in building the sail-powered wooden warship *Valiant* in 1758, and take a look at the 25-foot, 4-ton model of HMS *Victory* what was built for the 1941 film *That Hamilton Woman*, starring Vivien Leigh and Lawrence Olivier. Now repainted and with rigging, masts, and sails reassembled, the model is on permanent display in the Mast Bay.

Explore the Rope Walk and a myriad of fascinating artifacts (large and small) from Britain's great maritime history. Visit our latest gallery, Lifeboat!, the Royal National Lifeboat Collection which brings to life the 173-year history of the RNLI and its volunteer crews who risked their lives to save others in peril at sea. Visitors can go on board two of the fifteen historic lifeboats and experiment with the interactive water tanks to find out how hull design affects frigates speed through water and how lifeboats are self-righting. An optional audio guide to the gallery was added last year (additional charge) and children were able to try their hand at rowing the *James Leith*, a turn of the century pulling lifeboat — a great photo opportunity or family groups.

See where flags and sails have been made for over two hundred years in the Sail Colour Loft, step aboard the *Gannet*, the last remaining Victorian steam and sail powered sloop, and see

the nation's finest collection of muzzle-loading ship's guns in the Ordnance Gallery. Discover the ex-dockyard workers' own collection of memorabilia in the fascinating Historical Society Museum and experience what life was like below the waves with a tour on board the *Ocelot* (moored nearby).

For a change of pace, visit the beautiful walled Commissioner's Garden.

To really get away from it all, cruise the River Medway in style aboard the Paddle Steamer *Kingswear Castle* (May through September, extra charge applies).

With shops, licensed restaurant, tea shop, and picnic areas all on site, The Historic Dockyard is a one stop day out. It should come as no surprise that most visitors stay over four hours and still do not see everything. With a half-price return visit, valid within a year of first visit, there is plenty of time to enjoy all the attractions.

There is ample free on-site parking. Other facilities include a baby changing room, toilets for the disabled, loan of wheelchairs, and braille maps. Free guide to Facilities and Access for Visitors with Disabilities are available on request.

The Historic Dockyard
Chatham, Kent ME4 4TZ
Telephone 01634 823800

The Historic Dockyard, Chatham Over Four Centuries of Shipbuilding History

- 1547 Storehouse on Jillingham Water rented to King Henry VIII
- 1567 Anchorage area named Chatham
- 1570 Mast pond, storehouses, and forge built
- 1580 Queen Elizabeth entertains foreign dignitaries at Chatham
- 1586 The *Sunne*, a pinnacle of 40 tons, launched
- 1588 Battle of Gravelines disperses Spanish Armada

- 1619 New dry dock built, with wharves and cranes
- 1648 Cromwell views capture of Rochester from the Dockyard
- 1660 Charles II inherits fleet of 229 vessels
- 1667 Dutch invade Medway, eight British ships sunk, seven burned, two captured
- 1674 Peace with Netherlands brings period of decline
- 1675 Experimental catamaran built
- 1685 Modernization program includes two dry docks and twenty-one storehouses
- 1688–1698 Shipbuilding program confirms Chatham as premier dockyard
- 1695 Experimental ship with man powered side paddles built at Chatham
- 1704 Commissioner's House built at Chatham
- 1753–1758 Mast Houses and Mould Loft built
- 1765 Launch of *Victory*
- 1770 Nelson joins his first ship at Chatham
- 1786 Present Ropery built on site of previous building
- 1800–1803 *Victory* rebuilt at Chatham
- 1810 Marc Brunnel built steam powered sawmill at Chatham
- 1817–1823 John Dickens (father of Charles) clerk in Pay Office
- 1846 The *Teazer*, Chatham's first screw vessel, launched
- 1862 Modernization plan adds 380 acres to the existing ninety-four
- 1863 World's largest ship, the "ironclad" *Achilles*, launched

- | | | | |
|------|---|------|--|
| 1905 | Last battleship, HMS <i>Africa</i> , built at Chatham | 1957 | Major submarine building program begins |
| 1908 | Secret launch of submarine C17 | 1962 | HMS <i>Ocelot</i> , last submarine built for the Royal Navy, launched |
| 1918 | End of World War I starts period of decline | 1968 | Nuclear submarine complex opened |
| 1933 | New shipbuilding program begins | 1981 | Closure of Dockyard announced |
| 1934 | The cruiser HMS <i>Arethusa</i> launched | 1984 | The Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust formed to secure the oldest part of the Dockyard |
| 1940 | Chatham heavily involved in Dunkirk evacuation | | |
| 1945 | End of World War II leads to canceled orders | | |

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LETTERS

THE MURMANSK CONVOYS

I have just received my copy of *The American Neptune* 58/4 (Fall 1998), and as a veteran of the Russian convoys I read with great interest Dr. David Syrett's article on Convoys JW 56A, JW 56B, and RA 56 (pages 36–381).

Although it is carefully researched in great depth, there is an egregious error in the second paragraph relying, I suspect, on an outdated report.

Convoys to Russia 1941–1945 by Ruegg and Hague (1992) lists 104 Allied merchant ships lost between June 21, 1941 and May 8, 1945. They also list twenty-two British and Allied warships lost, while on the German side they lost five surface vessels and thirty-one U-boats.

According to Professor Dr. Jürgen Rohwer of the Library of Contemporary History, Stuttgart, there were an additional fifty-two Russian and Allied ships sunk or badly damaged while in the port of Murmansk. I can vouch for that, as I well recall the numerous wrecks littering Kola Inlet as early as May 1942. This makes a total of 214 vessels lost or damaged in the Arctic, not fifty-eight, a great discrepancy and supported in other recent printed sources.

In Clay Blair's *Hitler's U-Boat War* an attempt to denigrate the Arctic convoys is made quoting a figure of losses similar to Dr. Syrett's and dismissing those convoys as largely British propaganda. I regret Mr. Blair was not sitting in the port of Murmansk in May and June 1942 under a daily hail of bombs which might have given him a better insight.

W. A. HASKELL
Marxzell/Pfaffenrot
Germany

THE ENGRAVINGS OF PETER BRUEGEL THE ELDER

This letter consists of several personal reflections on "The Marine Engravings of Peter Bruegel the Elder" (Volume 58, number four) by T. Iain Gunn-Graham. Although I am an amateur naval historian and model ship builder, I feel that my comments are justified in spite of the fact that they may be obviously controversial. But as someone must have said, "controversy is the mother of solution."

Specifically:

1. The descriptions of the engravings of Klein Pl. 17 and Klein Pl. 18 have been erroneously reversed, which I assume are minor errors of publication layout and not those of Gunn-Graham.
2. The description under Pl. 17 (which should be 18) states that "the hull sides converge, making it a double-ended vessel of no known type." I cannot believe that this description is correct, and believe the lead transom or stern is most likely squared off as it would have been for any similar vessel of that period. The poops of these vessels were all narrow with exaggerated tumble homes, and although the poop railing of the engraved vessel appears to converge, one cannot say with any certainty that the lower segments of the stern converge, particularly as there is no stern view. For reasons of tradition and economy, Dutch vessels continued to have "squared" sterns below the main deck long after the English and French had converted to "a rounded tuck" transom, as lavishly documented in Frank Fox's *The Great Ships* and *A Distant Storm: The Four Days' Battle of 1666*.

Gunn-Graham also states under Pl. 17 (18) "However, if one looks at the anchored

boat with its sail raised in the length foreground, the sail is full of wind, a condition that could only be achieved by a wind blowing from the opposite direction. Here one thinks that the engraver must have recognized the anomaly and cut in an anchor cable in a belated attempt to render the scene more credible. I believe that Mr. Gunn-Graham has made an error in interpretation in that he assumes that the superior edge of the lateen sail is convex when, in fact, it is most probably concave, and therefore similar to the configurations of the sails of the other vessels in the engraving, with the wind blowing from the same direction — thus rendering inappropriate his discrediting comment about the engraver.

3. Additionally, under Pl. 17 (18) concerning the small anchored fishing vessel: "The engraving is also strange with its combination of a lateen yard and cross yard on one mast. In my opinion the small cross yard is in fact not a yard but a temporary boom tackled to the mast but supporting an awning or fish net for drawing and/or repair. It is highly unlikely that the fisherman in question would utilize a small cross yard mid-mast which would immediately compromise his effective use of the much larger lateen rig already in place. It seems that Mr. Gunn-Graham has used these tenuous and perhaps incorrect judgments to question the authenticity of the engraving, when in fact the engraving appears to be uniformly well executed by the same hand — in my "amateur" point of view at least.
4. Under Pl. 18 (17): "A similar vessel is in the center, and in this case the rigging of the southern European type, lacking deadeyes and lanyards." If one utilizes a small hand lens it can be readily discerned that the shrouds of this vessel do, in fact, have deadeyes and lanyards, rendering incorrect Gunn-Graham's remark about the type of rigging.
5. Under Pl. 101: "At the tip of the bowsprit is a peculiar object which looks like a pumpkin! Henry VIII's *Henry Grace à Dieu*, of the same period, had a gilded crown in this position, so this is probably an early example of a figurehead, perhaps in the form of a pome-

granate, a popular symbol of temporal authority in the Holy Roman Empire and Aragon at this time. Alternatively, it may be a buoy for attaching an anchor trip-line." In my opinion, it seems very unlikely that this represents an anchor buoy. It would have been very impractical to stow an anchor buoy in such a technically awkward position when it could have been easily bow cleated or placed in its usual location resting on a foremast channel tied to a shroud. I believe that this "pumpkin" merely represents a "warning/protection" bow lantern temporarily attached for off shore cruising.

In conclusion, I would like to say that I am sure that Mr. Gunn-Graham is superbly qualified as a marine art historian and critic. I am not by nature a "nit-picker" and do not engage in routinely writing letters of "constructive" criticism to any journal or publication. However, I have always been interested in doing ink drawing and appreciate engraving techniques of many types from many historical periods. The Bruegel engravings you presented in this article were, in my opinion, especially well done and historically interesting. My comments, therefore, are not meant to be derisive — but rather as merely additional opinions or "views" concerning the intricacies of the excellent engravings presented.

GILBERT MCARDLE
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

T. IAIN GUNN-GRAHAM REPLIES:

Dr. McArdle is quite correct. Evil gnomes transposed the illustrations of Plates 17 and 18. Mea Culpa!

His comments with respect to the continuing Dutch love of the extreme tumblehome and narrow taffrail are absolutely correct. However one must bear in mind that this period, like that of the late nineteenth century, was a time of experimentation and technical innovation which produced some rather odd hybrids. We are almost wholly reliant on the visual images produced by the contemporary artists of the time, and what you

see is what you get! When one comes across an image as profoundly odd as the central vessel in Pl. 17, one has the choice of declaring it an a) hitherto unknown type, or b) work of an inept artist who does not fully comprehend what he is seeing. Having said that, support for Dr. McArdle's view may be found in a woodcut of 1647 by Wenzel Hollar. This work shows a group of Dutch *Fluiten*. The ship on the extreme right of this work is portrayed with the same aspect as the ship in Pl. 17. Both have the extreme tumblehome and both have high curved poops. Where they differ is that the ship in the Hollar drawing shows a definitive flat taffrail, albeit extremely narrow, whereas the subject of Pl. 17 does not.

I cannot, however, agree with Dr. McArdle on the subject of the fishing boat to the left of Pl. 17. The sail is not fully deployed. Both the luff and the leech make narrow concave curves behind the spritsail yard, converging just to the rear of the deckhouse, forming a slim inverted triangle, thus the wind has to be blowing from aft, or from the starboard quarter. The quality of this portion of the print is very poor and, given the small size of the reproduction, I wonder if Dr. McArdle mistook the halliard, which runs behind the forestay from the tip of the spritsail yard to the base of the mast, for the luff of the sail? If this were so, then his interpretation would be reasonable.

Plates 17 and 18 have always been somewhat controversial. They did not appear in Bastelaer's

1907 catalog of Bruegel's woodcuts and engravings. They first saw the light of day in Campbell Dodgson's catalog of 1931. They were in a private collection and unlike the Bastelaer entries bore neither the artist's initials nor the engraver's name. In my opinion the quality of these two prints renders them somewhat suspect as coming from the hand of Bruegel. However, there is as yet no definitive proof either way. I would welcome other critical comments which might assist in clarifying the issue.

T. IAIN GUNN-GRAHAM
St. John's, Newfoundland

Michael P. Dyer, author of the article "The Historical Evolution of the Cutting-in Pattern, 1798–1967," *the American Neptune*, Volume 59, Number 2 (1999). Michael P. Dyer is a librarian and curator of maritime history at the Kendall Whaling Museum in Sharon, Massachusetts. He received a B.A. in American Studies from the Capitol Campus of Pennsylvania State University this article was first presented as a paper at the 1997 Whaling History Symposium at the Kendall Whaling Museum and is representative of his larger work in the history of American whaling illustration.



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Friday: Morning plenary session on “The Sea as Arena for Conflict” with Dr. John Hattendorf, Naval War College. Breakout sessions in the afternoon and evening.

Saturday: Morning plenary session on “The Sea as Inspiration” with Dr. Stuart Frank of the Kendall Whaling Museum. Afternoon session on “Presenting Maritime History” including Dr. Robert Ballard. Evening: dinner with keynote address by Dr. Felipe Fernández-Armesto.

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BOOK REVIEWS

PABLO EMILIO PÉREZ-MALLAÍNA, *Spain's Men of the Sea: Daily Life on the Indies Fleets in the Sixteenth Century*. Translated by Carla Rahn Phillips. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998. xi, 289 pages, eight pages of plates, illustrations (some in color), index. ISBN 0-8018-5746-5. A \$29.95.

All too often scholarly books written in foreign languages are translated into English as a favor to an author and not because of scholarly merit. *Spain's Men of the Sea* is emphatically not such a case. This work, a magisterial study of cross-Atlantic travel by Europe's greatest naval power in the sixteenth century, fills a void in the maritime literature of the period that will be welcomed by all students of naval history.

While descriptive in nature, this work is based firmly on number crunching massive amounts of data from the famous Archives of the Indies in Seville, particularly the Patronato and Contratación sections. Pérez-Mallaína explores the organization of the Indies fleet in Seville, origins of sailors and officers, the ship as a work place, daily life at sea, naval discipline and conflicts, and the intellectual horizons of sailors. Thoroughly modern in research methodology, Pérez-Mallaína is also in tune with the desire of many to write naval history from the sailors' view.

Spain's Men of the Sea will be the standard reference work on sixteenth century sea travel for decades to come, but critics can find assumptions and perspectives to question. As befits a professor at the University of Seville, Pérez-Mallaína treats this Spanish city as the beginning and end of the travel circle. He gives only passing attention to Veracruz, Cartagena, Portobelo, Nombre de Dios, and no attention to Havana. Since so many sailors left their ships once in the New World, and the outgoing cargo was replaced, surely these locations deserve substantial attention. The starting

point of the historical circle, just as in mathematics, is always decided by one's perspective.

When the weight of numbers from the Archives of the Indies failed to answer a question conclusively, Pérez-Mallaína often resorted to scholarly works on British naval history to cinch an argument. While understandable, given the extensive British interest in naval history, England was not a naval power until a century later. If comparative examples were needed, much more apt for this work would have been a look west at neighboring Portugal, the only other Christian power strong enough to put fleets the size of Spain's into the waters of the Atlantic, or east toward the Ottoman Empire, an even greater maritime rival in the Mediterranean.

Certainly, many other quibbles merit some attention. As in modern politics, the sexual lives of sixteenth century sailors now seem to be legitimate topics of scholarly investigation. Pérez-Mallaína realizes how dangerous it is to generalize on this subject from very limited evidence, particularly on the fashionable topic of homosexuality, but speculate he does. In addition, many will find pause with his argument that choosing a life at sea was an act of desperation, reflecting the lack of acceptable alternatives on land. His hesitant willingness to compare a sailor's life with that of a prisoner on land also provokes some reservations. Hard working conditions, dangerous accidents of nature, long hours of labor, high mortality rates, extended periods of unemployment — these all seem to invite comparisons with the earliest stages of industrial labor rather than life in a penal system. These minor points aside, what a good and welcome present from Pérez-Mallaína and his able translator, Carla Rahn Phillips, for English language readers to usher out the millennium!

JAMES A. LEWIS
Western Carolina University

JAMES TAYLOR, *Yachts on Canvas, Artists' Images of Yachts from the Seventeenth Century to the Present Day*. London: Conway Maritime Press, 1998. v + 160 pages, 146 illustrations, select bibliography, index of featured artists. 11 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 12". ISBN 085-177-7198. No price given.

In his book *Yachts on Canvas*, British art historian James Taylor sets out to "play a part... in the... reassessment" of the yachting genre in art and maritime history. Some of the finest yacht paintings and drawings, beginning with seventeenth century works, are described and exquisitely reproduced. Although the genre is specific, in three hundred years of drawing and painting there is much variety of composition and technique. The word for yacht in Dutch is *Jacht*, a word which is derived from the verb "to hurry" or "to hunt." The vessels "hurry" and "hunt" across the pages of this handsome, comprehensive study.

The Dutch Republic in the seventeenth century was a prosperous maritime power, and successful merchants spent their fortunes as often on expensive yachts as on country estates. This was the golden age of Dutch painting, the era of Rembrandt and Vermeer. Government offices, guilds, and merchants commissioned the paintings that still have resonance — portraits of themselves in lace and velvet; still lifes with exotic fruits and flowers, pottery, and platters; landscapes that are ninety percent sky — all drawn and painted with masterful attention to detail.

Maritime merchants were among the wealthy eager to record their accomplishments — in this case, their cargo ships and their yachts. Among the earliest in this genre, the works of the van de Velde are meticulously reproduced. *The Yacht Royal Escape Close-Hauled in a Breeze*, done by Willem van de Velde the Younger around 1675, shows one of the earliest recorded royal yachts, and as Taylor points out, "her mainsail is set loose-footed and boomless, part-brailed to the spars for stowing and reefing." What is interesting from the vantage of art history is the darkened foreground, the color, and the sky, all of which beautifully handled.

The history of yacht racing is examined, presented chronologically and beautifully illustrated, and the painters who recorded it are identi-

fied with pertinent biographical information. There is some wonderful background material, like the pencil and water color study of Kaiser Wilhelm II's yacht *Meteor II* by William Lionel Wyllie. The Kaiser had four yachts he named *Meteor*, and Wyllie came aboard them and produced drawings and watercolors.

Taylor's chapter on nineteenth century deck scenes and races contains just two representations of deck scenes, but it is a rare subject, perhaps because the people who commissioned this sort of painting preferred not to show the working aspects of life aboard. This is regrettable. Nicholas Matthews Condry's *William John Forester on Board the Yacht Alarm*, done around 1840, shows the group preparing to cast off, the steward with a plate of ham in hand, and the owner, Joseph Weld, wearing a top hat. The *Alarm* was one of the largest yachts ever launched; she won the King William IV Cup in 1838 and the Queen's Cup four times. This glimpse of the real characters who made that history is valuable, and it is a beautiful painting. Some of the finest and most detailed paintings of yacht racing appear in this chapter as well as the works of James Buttersworth, one of the most accurate painters in the genre.

The major artists of maritime art, such as Jacobsen, Cozzens, and Dawson, are represented in this treasury; it is exhaustive and includes contemporary artists, notably Michael Vaughn and J. Stewart Dews. Among the rare works by women is *Tracey Edwards On Board the Maiden*, done in 1996 by Rowena Wright. It is loosely painted and compelling, and personal. Taylor includes artists from Great Britain and North America, and introduces new Flemish, Neapolitan, and Australian painters. Many of the works have not been published before; Taylor gathered them from Bonhams, Christie's, Sotheby's, the New York Yacht Club, the Royal Cork Yacht Club, and the Royal Yacht Squadron.

The book's designer, Peter Champion, presents the work in simple arrangements of text and illustration, using buff paper to separate the sections of the volume. The book's illustrations are extremely well printed; many are reproduced as full pages, and even those that are small are clear, well chosen, and well placed for maximum

appreciation. *Yachts on Canvas* is a learned work of art and maritime history, accomplishing Taylor's reassessment with grace.

ERIN URBAN

The John A. Noble Collection
Staten Island, New York

ROBB ROBINSON, *Trawling: The Rise and Fall of the British Trawl Fishery*. Exeter, England: University of Exeter Press, 1998. 280 pages, eight plates, two maps, three drawings, appendix, note, bibliography, index. Paper, 5¾" by 9". ISBN 080-989-6285. £9.99.

The rise of the trawl fishery in Britain has been recognized as of prime historical importance, being seminal in the modern pattern of intensive exploitation and overfishing in the world's oceans. Although it has had some previous treatment in popular literature, *Trawling: The Rise and Fall of the British Trawl Fishery* is the first serious effort to put its development in depth under academic scrutiny and is accordingly very welcome here. It is a great volume and a variety of primary and secondary source material has been consulted. Appropriately, this includes at the national level a series of government reports and statistics, and there has also been much use of local sources in the different trawl ports. The book is clearly organized and bluntly written, although main themes could possibly have been better highlighted at the start of the book and at the beginnings of chapters. While it does justice to the whole span of development of this fishery, which essentially involved the use of dragnets on the sea bed to catch demersal fish, it concentrates most on the development of distant water trawling by which the rich Arctic grounds of the North Atlantic were exploited by British fishermen. This in the long term was to play a crucial part in the basic change in the international law of the sea in the 1970s whereby as a reaction to increasing overexploitation, fisheries came under the jurisdiction of coastal states and distant water trawling was perforce with a painful retraction.

This book recognizes the background changes of the modern period, whereby an expanding population and rising living standards combine to

produce an unprecedented upsurge in demand for fresh sea fish in Britain. From about 1840 this was accelerated with the spread of the railway network by which virtually the whole of the country could be supplied from the trawl ports within twenty-four hours of landing; fish provided the cheapest source of animal protein in the diets of many people.

A prominent and indeed emotive theme is the working conditions for the men on board. Working conditions were harsh or brutal, hardship and danger were ever present, and men had very restricted time on shore between trips. The systems of payment put a strong emphasis on securing good catches, whatever the hazards. Until the 1880s much of the labor was provided by a system of indentured apprentices, which was effectively near to serfdom, and even in the twentieth century labor troubles were nearly endemic as trawlermen fought for better pay and working conditions. Behind this was an expanding industry needing considerable capital investment, especially after the switch from sailing smacks to the more efficient steam trawlers from the 1880s. The growth of the industry was relentless. An important part of the response to the fall off in catches from the nearer grounds was the expansion into middle distance and distant waters. This was interrupted only during the two world wars, when in addition to fishing curtailed in waters subject to hostilities, many trawlers were requisitioned by the government for naval use. While boats did improve over time, the fact that operations were extended into Arctic waters on a whole-year basis meant that the dangers from storms, cold, and ice became greater; the accident rate was always high, and boats were lost periodically. In the process of this expansion fishermen using traditional methods were often roughly shouldered aside. As well as generating hostility within Britain, this had the more serious long-term consequence of provoking mounting opposition of fishermen in countries like Iceland and Norway, and the book culminates in the "cod wars" which played a vital part in coastal states ultimately securing their own exclusive fishing zones.

While the various photographic illustrations of trawlers are welcome in giving something of

the atmosphere of the fishery, one does miss actual work scenes. Nonetheless this book has provided an unprecedented in-depth analysis of the rise and fall of a fishery, which, in addition to being important for Britain, was a global trendsetter Europe. In the twentieth century trawling has become the single most important fishing method in the world, and has much to do with the modern resource crisis in the living resources of the sea.

JAMES R. COULL
University of Aberdeen
Aberdeen, Scotland

KRIS E. LANE, *Pillaging the Empire: Piracy in the Americas, 1500–1750*. Armonk, N.Y., London: M. E. Sharpe, 1998. xxiv + 237 pages, illustrations, maps, tables, bibliography, index. Cloth. ISBN 0-7656-0256-3. Paperback. ISBN 0-7656-0257-1.

The need for a more up-to-date survey of piracy in the Caribbean and elsewhere in the Americas has been well served by Professor Lane. The topic has long been popular with the reading public as well as with moviegoers. Scholars lost interest in the swashbuckling approach, but lately new approaches to maritime history, in its economic and technical aspects, to Spanish Imperial administration, and to the history of “marginalized” persons, have renewed academic interest in the egregious phenomenon of piracy. Lane’s bibliography shows this: Carla Rahn Phillips on Spanish galleons, Paul E. Hoffman on Caribbean defense, Marcus Rediker’s sociological look at seafarers, Robert C. Ritchie on the international effort to suppress piracy, and Norman Thrower’s work on maritime charts and maps. We even have pirate sexuality analyzed by Barry Burg, *Sodomy and the Pirate Tradition* (1984) — which I do not find particularly convincing.

Lane knows both the scholarly work and the long history of popular works on piracy, from John Esquemeling (1684) through Philip Gosse (1924, 1932). His “Preface” and “Introduction” provide thoughtful observations and give direction to his text. The chronology found between them is handy, because Lane organizes his narra-

tive in phases that sometimes overlap. Wisely, he begins with Spain’s experience in the Mediterranean with Barbary corsairs, although their piracy was in the context of jihad and crusade. The frequent wars alternated with privateering, although Spain, with its claim to monopoly in the New World, regarded all as pirates. In resisting attack, the Spaniards often armed African slaves, so calling them “innocent bystanders” (page 46) may be mistaken. In this chapter and throughout Lane, who knows the languages, makes excellent use of contemporary material. At the chapter’s end Lane provides the first informative “Box” of six, which treats such topics as coinage, ship-building, and what pirates ate.

The Elizabethan sea dogs appear in Chapter Two, and not in the hoary tradition of good guys versus bad guys. Lane here and elsewhere takes a balanced approach between Spaniards and their adversaries, with all their religious and national differences. The English gave the Spaniards new headaches when they took piracy to the Pacific. Dutchmen dominate the next chapter. As the revolt of the Netherlands against Philip II of Spain grew, Philip excluded his rebel subjects from Spanish markets, which drove them to smuggling and piracy overseas. The renewal of war in 1621 between the Dutch and Spain, after a Twelve Years’ Truce, took the assault on the Caribbean to new heights, climaxing with the capture of a Spanish treasure fleet at Matanzas Bay, Cuba, by a Dutch squadron. The Dutch also penetrated the Pacific, but their chief business lay on its opposite side, ripping the East Indies from Portugal, then ruled by Spain’s king. The cost of Spain’s response strained Spanish resources.

By the mid-seventeenth century the Caribbean became a free-for-all. The Dutch, the French, and the English were often at war with Spain. This was the heyday of the buccaneers, whom Lane treats marvelously well. Cromwell’s navy seized Jamaica (he did declare war on Spain the next year), where Port Royal came to rival Tortuga as a pirate lair. Henry Morgan gets his due both as pirate and suppressor of piracy, although I am not sure that the defenders of Panama in 1672 were as formidable as they seem here. The scale of piracy and war in the seventeenth century Caribbean causes Lane to devote a separate chapter to the

Pacific, the setting for *Robinson Crusoe* and some remarkable pirate map making. The final chapter treats the worldwide piracy spawned by all the wars, the age of Captain Kidd, and the international efforts to eradicate it, especially by the Royal Navy. It does seem careless in the wrap-up to link Commodore George Anson commanding a British ship during a war with Spain with piracy and contraband (page 184). In the useful index, some French, Spanish, and Portuguese names with "de" appear under the letter D. Recommended for buffs, students, and public and college libraries (and libraries aboard Caribbean cruise ships).

PETER PIERSON
Santa Clara University
Santa Clara, California

DENNIS L. NOBLE, *Lighthouses & Keepers: The U.S. Lighthouse Service and Its Legacy*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1997. xviii + 244 pages, 56 photographs, nine illustrations, seven drawings, fourteen maps, bibliography, notes, glossary, index. Cloth, 7¼" x 10¼". ISBN 1-5575-0638-8. \$34.95.

Dennis L. Noble, a retired US Coast Guardsman with a Ph.D. in history from Purdue University, has worked as a National Park Service ranger, a US Army historian, museum curator, and both a prison and public librarian. He has produced a concise, competent survey from a national view of American lighthouses and their keepers that is both well organized and clearly written. It examines briefly practically all aspects of aids to navigation, "except architecture and river lights," from their colonial beginnings until absorption of the US Lighthouse Service by the Coast Guard in 1939.

By boldly approaching his subject from a national perspective, Noble has continued faithfully in the footsteps of only two other pioneer historians — George R. Putnam, *Lighthouses and Lightships of the United States* (1917) and F. Ross Holland Jr., *America's Lighthouses* (1972). The vast majority of those writing about lighthouses deal solely with individual or regional lighthouses, or the romance surrounding these

lonely sentinels of the sea. Noble, like Putnam and Holland, keeps his emphasis upon the federal organization and administration of the system of lights and the tremendous impact of technology. He treats in detail only seven representative light structures, with others being mentioned, but not in depth. Likewise, he describes at length only four men and their significance — Stephen Pleasonton, who controlled the system of lights from 1820 to 1852, George P. Putnam, the first US Commissioner of Lighthouses (1910–1935), and two inventors of lighting devices, the American Winslow Lewis and the Frenchman Augustin-Jean Fresnel. He also gives proper importance to the pivotal 1852 creation of the nine-member US Lighthouse Board that completely revamped the federal system of lighthouses.

Noble has not only updated Putnam's and Holland's histories, he has expanded their treatments through significant refinements and new topics covered in detail. His new chapter on the "hard-working, but overlooked, buoy tenders and their crews" is especially welcome. He even includes a chapter on "ghosts and unusual tales," which provides an unusual "understanding of one side of the keeper's life at an isolated station." Noble also differentiates sharply between the lifestyles of the keepers along the shores and the crews of those "lighthouses that went to sea." Another welcome addition is an easily understood introductory explanation of fog signals, buoys, and electronic aids to navigation. Especially intriguing are his shrewd appraisals of the key personalities, and his fascinating descriptions of the events. He also provides a clear explanation of the tangled web of development from the first colonial experimental attempts to warn mariners away from hidden dangers to the modern day aids to navigation.

Lighthouses & Keepers abounds in little known historical facts. The lighthouse tender *Shubrick*, for example, not only became the first to serve on the Pacific Ocean, but was also the first to be armed. Besides providing "protection against the Indians at many points along the coast," the tender once even trained her cannon on Port Townsend at the order of a senior Treasury official and threatened to shell its white

citizens unless the Custom House records were surrendered, which was promptly done. After the Civil War, she served as a US Navy flagship of a five-ship expedition for an attempt to lay a telegraph cable across the Bering Strait before returning to lighthouse duties.

Besides many rarely seen photographs and illustrations, the book also contains the fourteen maps that show the location of all principal lighthouses of the United States. Both its excellent bibliography and the archival documents identified in the footnotes make it especially useful.

Because of his unique qualifications and superb mastery of his subject, coupled with his candid insider comments, Noble has produced a thorough historical study of federal management of lighthouses and their keepers. His book is a superb overall survey, loaded with facts, statistics, fascinating personalities, penetrating insights, and shrewd first hand observations. It will remain an authoritative account for decades — an enjoyable and stimulating read.

TRUMAN R. STROBRIDGE
US Coast Guard historian (1970–1976)
Alexandria, Virginia

RICHARD BUEL JR., *In Irons: Britain's Naval Supremacy and the American Revolutionary Economy*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998. xi + 397 pages, index. ISBN 0-300-07388-7. \$35.00.

In spite of its nautical title and the illustration of a naval engagement on the dust jacket, Richard Buel Jr.'s *In Irons: Britain's Naval Supremacy and the American Revolutionary Economy* is most concerned about agriculture. Specifically, Professor Buel has demonstrated and analyzed the near total collapse of American commercial agriculture between 1775 and 1780, its brief revival in 1780–1781 (just in time to make possible the victory of Yorktown), and its subsequent decline until the adoption of the Constitution. Those interested in maritime and naval history will have no cause for complaint, however.

Buel concentrates on the availability of

markets as the chief determinant of farmers' behavior and those markets dependent largely on the movement of grain by river and sea. Thus he devotes great attention not only to farmers and millers, but also to merchants and shipowners. He also sees the British naval blockade as one of the two chief reasons all of them faced such enormous obstacles and the American Revolution almost collapsed. The other reason was a British occupation at one time or another of what he calls America's gateway ports, Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston, which he treats as far more damaging than most purely military historians consider it.

While those interested in maritime history will enjoy his detailed discussion of maritime trade, those interested in naval history are given a balanced account not only of the British blockade but of the unsuccessful attempts of the Continental and state navies to break it. In fact it is hard to imagine anyone interested in the American Revolution who will not learn from and enjoy this wonderful book. Buel's topic is so sweeping, his research so broad, and his interests so varied that his work can be used as a general economic history of the war. Indeed, I know of no other economic history of the period as sophisticated. Those interested in social history should find this book fascinating for its study of how people in a variety of occupations adapted to changing circumstances. Political historians will find considerable material on both national and Pennsylvania politics, particularly relating to fiscal and economic issues. Buel makes a major contribution to military history, particularly through his study of the Yorktown campaign, which succeeded in the nick of time before food supplies gave out. Moreover, his writing is brisk, clear, and free of jargon.

Buel opens himself to criticism only when he departs from American history. While it seems that there is virtually no area of American history with which he is not expert, he is on shakier ground when he talks about European history. He does have some very valuable comments about the reasons French merchants did so poorly in America, but his understanding of French government policy is less sure. On page 156 he states that "The French did not care about American

independence.” Nothing could be less true. France was desperate to see America become politically independent of Britain because she believed that this alone would deprive Britain of a monopoly on the American trade, thereby so weakening Britain that the European balance of power would permanently change the new France’s favor. Buel, also on page 202, gives sole credit to John Laurens for the bountiful French financial assistance of 1781, while the fact Benjamin Franklin played a far more important role than did the diplomatically maladroit young Laurens. These, however, are minor caveats. For the vast majority of the book Buel is as reliable and informative as he is eloquent. It would be wonderful if we had as good a history of the impact of the war on the French economy or the British economy as Buel has given us of its impact on the American.

Another part of this book’s appeal is its handsome appearance and reasonable price. Numerous concessions have been made to economy; there are no illustrations, maps, or bibliographies, and the notes are in the back. On the other hand, it has been well edited with very few typos (such as the mistake in addition in Table 7.3 on page 177) and it does have a good index. Given the exorbitant price of far inferior books, not only Professor Buel but also Yale University Press should be commended.

JONATHAN R. DULL
New Haven, Connecticut

JULIAN GWYN, *Excessive Expectations: Maritime Commerce and the Economic Development of Nova Scotia, 1740–1870*. Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1998. xvi + 294, three maps, fifteen illustrations, seventy-three tables, notes, index. Cloth, 6" x 9". ISBN 0-7735-1584-8. Canadian \$55.00.

The word “maritime,” which appears in the subtitle of this book, always poses a problem for those of us who live in Nova Scotia. Does it relate to the items connected with the sea or those related to Canada’s “Maritime Provinces?” Since the book deals only with Nova Scotia, presumably

it does not mean the latter, but, from the point of view of one interested in the sea, I am not sure that the former is entirely appropriate either. While shipping, shipbuilding, imports, and exports are discussed, the book clearly relates to economics — but then, can the two be separated?

In *Excessive Expectations: Maritime Commerce and the Economic Development of Nova Scotia, 1740–1870*, Julian Gwyn, a former professor of history at the University of Ottawa, takes a new approach to the history of Nova Scotia from the end of the Acadian era to shortly after Confederation, when Nova Scotia joined Ontario, Quebec, and New Brunswick to form the Dominion of Canada. He sets out to prove that the period was not the “golden age of sail” but that, in reality, it was generally a dismal economic period. This he accomplishes through the collection and utilization of government and other records, data relating to various aspects of the province’s economy from a variety of sources, and through newspapers, theses, and other published histories.

Gwyn approaches his topic in two ways. In Part One he uses the chronological method and divides his period into three chapters: “Wartime Expansion, 1740–1815,” “Economic Stress with Peace, 1815–1853,” and “Recovery and Stagnation, 1853–1870.” These chapters are further subdivided and deal with various products of Nova Scotia including agriculture, fisheries, wood products, shipbuilding, and coal as well as with wages, imports and exports, the influence of war, free trade, etc. In Part Two, entitled “Four Perspectives,” his chapters discuss economic regions, imports and the standard of living, the impact of reciprocity, and the balance of payments. All are followed by his conclusions.

Gwyn’s general conclusion of financial instability and a depressed provincial economy is probably correct. He generally makes a good understandable case, but there are a number of flaws and incorrect conclusions throughout the book.

Gwyn relies heavily on the *Acadian Recorder* and, to a lesser extent, on other Halifax newspapers, whereas regional papers such as the *Yarmouth Herald*, Pictou’s *Colonial Standard*, and the *Cape Breton News* are referred to much less

frequently. Would these papers have reflected a much different point of view from those of the capital? This appears a possibility when he quotes the *Yarmouth Tribune* discussing “great optimism” (page 124) and the *Acadian Recorder* of only a month earlier calling Nova Scotia “a third rate British Colony.” He does not explain these opposites.

Indeed, the lack of significant use of the *Yarmouth Herald*, along with a possible lack of understanding of shipping, led him to be significantly off in his “Estimated Shipping Earnings 1850–1870” (page 211, Table 8.4). In this table he attempts to show the 1850s’ net earnings of the total Nova Scotian fleet engaged in other than coastal trade by using the Yarmouth fleet of 1855 as a “surrogate.” He “assigns” all the seventy-six brigs, brigantines, and schooners to the coastal trade. A check of the *Yarmouth Herald*’s “Shipping Intelligence” columns for 1855 reveals that eleven of the fifteen brigs and between seven and twelve of the twenty-two brigantines were, in fact, engaged in foreign trade. This throws his estimates for 1855 alone off by sixteen and a half percent to twenty percent and therefore all his other 1850s’ figures as well.

While the facts and figures relating to marine subjects from archival and other documented sources are difficult to dispute, it seems that Gwyn’s general knowledge of this subject field could be better. On the last page of the book he adds new and unreferenced information when he says, “With the collapse of freight rates, shipping became cut-throat and shipowners reduced overheads partly by under-insuring vessels and cargoes, but mainly from mid-century by cutting sailors’ wages” (page 233). Some of this may be true, but it does not apply only to Nova Scotia. Freight rates were cyclical and dependent upon a variety of factors, not the least of which was the worldwide economy with its booms and depressions. “Shipping became cut-throat” — was it ever different? “Under insuring cargoes and vessels” — what evidence supports this? Finally, “sailor’s wages” were not cut by the shipowners themselves — rather they were determined by the availability of manpower in ports around the world.

Gwyn continues by stating that Nova Scotians

“continued as owners of craft of small tonnage in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, or the West Indies trade, or they were forced out altogether” (page 233). Not everywhere they weren’t. Yarmouth shipowners continued to build their deep sea fleets well beyond the 1870 cut-off date of this book, peaking in 1878. Windsor, another Nova Scotian deep sea port of registry, surpassed Yarmouth’s tonnage in the 1880s and peaked in 1891. (Keith Matthews and Gerald Panting, *Ships and Shipbuilding in the North Atlantic Region*. Memorial University of Newfoundland: St. John’s, 1978. Appendix 3.)

While Gwyn generated the table regarding shipping earnings, he does provide many tables from statistical evidence found in government records. His facts are prolific, but sometimes the provision of so many facts makes it difficult for him to interpret them. For example, in one paragraph alone (pages 71–72), he discusses the self sufficiency of agriculture comparing the 1850s with 1815, the horses, cattle, sheep, and swine per capita in 1850 compared to 1808, the stagnation caused by diseased crops in the 1840s and early 1850s and the possible climatic causes of same between the 1820s and 1850s, the potato blights from 1845 to 1852 and the damage to wheat crops from 1845 onward. Lots of facts, but dull reading.

The dependence on available statistics also tends to cause Gwyn to rely on them completely and not to look beyond them resulting, possibly, in inaccurate conclusions. In Chapter Six he links imports to the standard of living for Nova Scotians based on imported food and beverage commodities such as coffee, grain, rice, bread, flour, molasses, sugar, etc. Internal production is not mentioned in this chapter, and he does not discuss the fact that the large rural population of Nova Scotia would have been fed to a significant degree through hunting and fishing.

In other parts of the book the standards of living are pegged to wage rates and commodity prices. Gwyn shows, through wages of certain trades and laborers, how wages fluctuated over the period of 1850 to 1873. He then factors in inflation based on the price of various consumables and arrives at the interesting conclusion that most laborers could buy significantly less with their daily wage of \$1.00 per day in 1873

than they could with their \$0.60 per day in 1850. One wonders whether this applied globally or only to Nova Scotia.

We are all familiar with comments about statistics, and we understand that the value of statistics is often questionable. Gwyn himself discusses the difficulty of trying to use statistics: "The study of wealth distribution is a good example of creative scholarship. As governments failed to collect the necessary data, historians who attempt to draw conclusions from the surviving records, which were not designed for the purpose, have found themselves involved in controversy" (page 102). This point can be well taken from Tables 4.3 and 4.4, in which he provides "Average inventoried wealth (\$), by region, of those probated in 1851" and the same for 1871. In discussing the data he mentions all the exclusions of the Nova Scotian probate law, leaving the reader to wonder, given all the exclusions, exactly how accurate this information might be.

There are many good, substantial aspects of *Excessive Expectations*. Gwyn discusses broad topics such as the wealth created by war and by garrisoning Halifax with Imperial troops. The fishery and its problems are discussed, as is the Reciprocity Treaty which allowed more free trade between Great Britain and its colonies and the United States. Many aspects of Nova Scotia's economy, including sections on shipping, ship-building, marine insurance and, to a lesser extent, the tables relating to the imports and exports, are of interest.

The book is thorough and full of facts. Julian Gwyn produces some interesting conclusions, but are they correct? *Excessive Expectations* offers a different perspective of Nova Scotia's history — one which is both intriguing and thought provoking.

ERIC J. RUFF
Yarmouth, Nova Scotia

WILLIAM DANE PHELPS, WILLIAM STURGIS, AND JAMES GILCHRIST SWAN, *Fur Traders from New England: The Boston Men in the North Pacific, 1787–1800*. Edited with notes by Briton C. Busch and Barry M. Gough. Spokane: Arthur

H. Clark, 1997. Cloth, 137 pages + seven blank pages, editors' introduction, bibliography, index. 6" x 9½". ISBN 0-87062-261-7.

Few specialties of maritime commerce attract sufficient interest to create a cult. The Royal Navy of Nelson's time is one such subject, buoyed recently by the success of Patrick O'Brian's remarkable Aubrey/Maturin novels. Another cult arena is Yankee whaling, led by its spiritualistic albino icon, Moby-Dick. Yet another is shipwreck, most particularly that of the "unsinkable" *Titanic*.

Periodically, the North Pacific fur trade threatens to foster another cult, and there are discernible reasons for such interest. The fur trade commingles the remote wilderness of the Pacific Northwest with the sophisticated mystery of pre-Westernized China. Profitable returns from the sale of the gorgeous sea otter pelts helps mirror the base gauge that forms our modern society. A balanced reconstruction of the fur trade on a day in some parts expiates its effect upon the Native societies that formerly thrived within the natural order of the Pacific landscape.

This current anthology constitutes a collation of three rare documents of the fur trade written by men with contemporaneous knowledge of the business. It seems vital to restore such documents to their rightful place in the canon of literature of the Pacific Northwest, and to this pursuit editors Busch and Gough have devoted considerable energy. William Dane Phelps, William Sturgis, and James G. Swan recorded the trade when a living population might yet have offered details, but they were not mere transcribers. Rather, they were authors and historians in their own right. It is fair to say that they were also reporters with an agenda, in particular Sturgis, whose purportedly open and complete narrative omits the most controversial atrocities performed on the Northwest Coast, such as the enslavement of John Jewett among the natives of Nootka Sound, or the "preemptive" strike by the *Columbia's* crew against the village of Opitsat.

Phelps earned one footnote in history thorough his association with Richard Henry Dana and *Two Years Before the Mast*; another for his newspaper articles and book he wrote under the

pseudonym "Webfoot" that recalled his sailing days on the West Coast of North America. Phelps's contemporary and colleague Sturgis was a participant, as the editors note, "in the Boston world of commerce, trade, and seafaring, and as part-owner of some of the vessels which Phelps commanded." Sturgis himself made four voyages to the Northwest Coast, beginning as a foremost jack in the *Eliza* and retiring after only twelve years at sea, by which time he had been made master. By chronological precedence he became the first historian of the fur trade.

Chronologically later than Phelps and Sturgis, Swan made unique contributions to the understanding of Native American cultureways by living for years among the Makah people and publishing perceptive accounts, among them *The Indians of Cape Flattery* (1868) and *The Northwest Coast, or Three Years' Residence in Washington Territory* (1875). His personal journals later became the touchpoint for *Winter Brothers: A Season at the Edge of America* (1980), a weighty but little-heralded introspective narrative of the Northwest Coast by Ivan Doig.

Busch and Gough speculate that some of this material, particularly Phelps's "Solid Men of Boston," was so little known in the twentieth century that historians as capable as Samuel Eliot Morrison probably missed reading it. Phelps published "Solid Men of Boston" only in the *Commercial Bulletin* newspaper of that city in 1869. The most accessible version of it, an edited fair-copy in the Bancroft Library at the University of California, lacks Phelps's epic opening paragraph, which the current editors have reinstated.

For the Sturgis account, the editors have turned to none less than Judge Frederick W. Howay, whose examination of commercial trade on the Northwest Coast must remain unrivaled. Busch's and Gough's bibliography lists no fewer than thirteen publications by him, and they freely acknowledge their debt, for it is Howay's edit of Sturgis's memoir, as published in the *British Columbia Historical Quarterly* that they have selected for inclusion in this present work, retaining even Howay's footnotes intact.

Swan's contribution, a list of vessels engaged in the sea otter trade up to 1808, is a mere codicil to Phelps and Sturgis, but for anyone enamored of

tabular data it is a rare and valuable codicil, prepared carefully by an informed observer accustomed to taking exacting notes. It is the same list Swan published in the Northwest Coast. (Fastidious eyes will discern the omission in the transcription of the rig of the brig *Littler* for 1800.) Despite the redundancy, it is a valuable addition, for the business of recording vessel arrivals on the Pacific coast during the fur trade era was made entirely impracticable by the paucity of communication and the inconsistencies of shorthand, phonetic spelling, and guesswork recorded in several languages by bureaucrats and sailors alike.

These rescued imprints will command no attention at the bookseller's in the mall. Without even recognizing the current "retro" trend, this new Arthur H. Clark publication is identical to hundreds of books already familiar to most history readers. Handsomely sewn-bound in traditional navy blue cloth, cover embossed with gold rules and type, margins and gutters wide, text design old fashioned and legible, it seems dedicated to library tables rather than to coffee tables. Cost overruns are mitigated against by the deletion of a glossy dust jacket featuring an artist's rendition of, say, the crew of the *Albatross* attempting to enforce a settlement on the banks of the Columbia River in 1810, or James Swan walking the beach while deep in philosophical intercourse with some Neah Bay whale hunter.

Of course, *Fur Traders from New England: The Boston Men in the North Pacific, 1787-1800* is neither an O'Brian nor indeed a work of original scholarship by its two esteemed editors. This is an anthology of antique documents refreshed by repatriation of severed parts, and enlarged by expert review and detailed annotation. It belongs within any collection devoted to American merchant commerce in the Pacific Ocean.

ROBERT LLOYD WEBB
Phippsburg, Maine

ERIC MCKEE, *Working Boats of Britain: Their Shape and Purpose*. London: Conway Maritime Press, 1997. ii + 207 pages, 181 illustrations,

sixteen appendices, index. Cloth, 8½" x 11¼". ISBN 0-85177-277-3.

Working Boats of Britain: Their Shape and Purpose is a new edition of the book originally published in 1983. The author, Eric McKee, and his wife, upon their decision to undertake this composition of such a detailed record, make a tour around the entire coast of England and Scotland. It is not clear how or where the illustrations were assembled. This is not important. It is only necessary to say that McKee's drawings are meticulous and exquisite and acutely perceptive.

The drawings basically support the text, as is the usual purpose, but they must be noted as exceptional. The subject of the book would be lost without illustration, and with such line drawn illustrations mostly in perspective, the definitions and descriptions become unusually precise.

An example of the extension of descriptive illustration of boats is McKee's use of the under body's mirror-like reflection, also in perspective. There are twenty pages of such descriptions of varieties of hull forms, a most unique extension of perspective.

For rowing boats, McKee examines in detail the form and ratios of the oars and rowing positions relative to the boat and rower. Has there ever been an examination and definition chart of length of oars reverses blade area, plotted against river craft, open water boats, beach boats, and sea boats? It is rare information.

McKee summarizes in an all-inclusive statement: "I have known many boats overseas," and he lists some ten locally named craft from New England and the Orient and adds: "after such exotic craft, the discovery that British boats and their surroundings can be as interesting and varied has been... most rewarding." This has been McKee's all-encompassing description of his work.

On page fifteen McKee uniquely defines the difference between a ship and a boat, including the gray area in between. Nowhere else have I ever encountered this remarkable answer to an often asked question.

McKee departs from the identification of the boats he describes in several instances, one in which he describes the mechanics of his perspec-

tive drawings and their projection. The book is organized and devised throughout in a manner that is at the same time helpful and sometimes confusing.

There are Parts I and II, subdivided each into six chapters, plus seven appendices. The subjects in each of these divisions follow sequences unrelated to geographics of the boats' locations. This makes for a bit of difficulty following the nature of his locations and/or boats' development. However, the descriptions and backgrounds are clear and logical. The appendices provide considerable assistance in locating the craft and their geographical and chronological life and history. Consequently, the index is only a page and a half. There is not sufficient space to describe the discussions involving names such as "punts" which has many meanings.

Altogether, *Working Boats of England* can become a companion to pick up and browse in all winter.

THOMAS C. GILLMER
Annapolis, Maryland

BRIAN LAVERY, *Nelson and the Nile: The Naval War against Bonaparte 1798*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1998. 318 pages, seventy-four illustrations, eight color plates, twenty-five maps, bibliography, notes, index. Cloth, 6.90" x 9.59". ISBN 1-55750-640-X. \$42.95.

On August 1, 1798, a British squadron of thirteen ships-of-the-line and one fifty-gun ship, under the command of Rear Admiral Sir Horatio Nelson, attacked a more heavily armed French fleet of thirteen ships-of-the-line under Vice Admiral Brueys. The French fleet lay at anchor bow to stern in a line in Aboukir Bay, twelve miles east of Alexandria, where it had just conveyed an army under Bonaparte for the conquest of Egypt. Nelson attacked late in the day. Some of his ships passed between the French line and the shore while others engaged the seaward side, compelling each French ship in succession to fight both sides as the British progressed slowly along the French line. With the exception of two ships that escaped, every French ship was destroyed or captured.

The tale of this famous battle has been told before, but never with the attention to detail and breadth of topical coverage of Brian Lavery's *Nelson and the Nile: The Naval War against Bonaparte 1798*. Curator of Ship Technology at the National Museum in Greenwich, England, and author of eleven previous books on the organization of the British navy, on its ships, and on Nelson, Lavery was well-situated both geographically and intellectually to write this study.

Lavery took every advantage available to him to base his conclusions on the close analysis of the primary sources, as well as to select numerous illustrations that not only ornament the book, but also supplement the text. A print of the Board of Admiralty's office, for instance, brings to life a precise description of the board's daily routine.

For the benefit of the landlubber, Lavery provides cogent explanations of sailing terms while enlightening the reader about the limitations that dependence on the wind places on a ship's or a squadron's maneuvers. He lucidly describes the structure of a warship, the organization of a ship's company, and daily life on board a man-of-war.

Nelson's devotees will read about the arrangement of his cabin on board HMS *Vanguard*, the treatment of his galley contrary to Navy Board policy, and the contents of his clothes chest. They will also read blunt criticism of Nelson's inept meddling in Italian affairs in the heady aftermath of his victory at the Nile.

One of the book's most intriguing contributions to our understanding of the Nile campaign is its revision of the myth of Nelson's "band of brothers." The popular image has Nelson gathering his captains round a convivial table in his cabin where they discuss the tactical options and squadron maneuvers in various circumstances until they are thoroughly indoctrinated with his philosophy and are able to act in battle as he would want without the necessity of elaborate signals. Lavery demonstrates that, at least in the Nile campaign, such a scenario could not have taken place. A careful examination of ships' logs indicates that Nelson never had more than a few of his captains together on the flagship at any one time. His tactical ideas and his expectation that his captains exercise individual initiative he must

have communicated to each captain one by one, or at most a few at a time.

If Nelson had intercepted Brueys earlier and been able to prevent the French Army's landing in Egypt, France may never have seen Bonaparte rise to political power. The earlier interception did not happen largely because Nelson lacked the necessary scouting. Lavery explains the British squadron's movements that Nelson ordered in the absence of good intelligence. He also does what other writers have not done, which is to devote a chapter to following the movements of the frigates that were intended for Nelson's squadron. Lavery thus provides a crucial link in a chain of historical contingencies that affected the course of European history.

The work is aptly titled, since Nelson is the central figure. Nevertheless, Lavery deftly relates the story of the entire campaign on which control of the Mediterranean hung, from the origins of the French government's decision to undertake the conquest of Egypt, through the military and political consequences of the destruction of the French fleet. *Nelson and the Nile* is an engaging and intelligent book that can be read with profit and pleasure by amateur and scholar alike.

MICHAEL J. CRAWFORD
Naval Historical Center

CURTIS L. NELSON, *Hunters in the Shallows: A History of the PT Boat*. Washington, DC: Brassey's, 1998. x + 242, twenty-five photographs, six illustrations, four maps, bibliography, notes, index. Cloth, 9¼"x 6¼". ISBN 1-57488-167-1. \$28.50

During World War II the US Navy deployed a limited number of "motor torpedo boat" squadrons in the Pacific and European theaters. Better known as "mosquito" or "PT" boats, these small vessels were built for speed. Equipped with powerful engines and mainly constructed of marine plywood, PT boats featured a shallow draft and proved most successful in tidal "brown water" areas of action during the war. Mostly employing fast-attack "hit and run" tactics, PT boat sailors relied on swift maneuverability and

the element of surprise during engagements with the Axis enemy. However, US Navy PT boats had a relatively limited role in the overall Allied war effort. Nevertheless, many postwar readers were captivated by the stories of legendary PT boat heroes like John D. Bulkeley and future president John F. Kennedy. PT boats were also highlighted in popular John Wayne movies like *In Harm's Way* and *They Were Expendable*. After President Kennedy was assassinated in 1963, many grieving Americans celebrated his memory by watching the blockbuster film version of Robert J. Donovan's book *PT 109*, featuring Cliff Robertson as the heroic JFK. Many readers may also recall the popular television comedy series *McHale's Navy*, which traced the fictional escapades of PT boat commander Quinton McHale and the sailors of PT 73 as they spread madcap mayhem in the waters off New Caledonia in the Southwest Pacific. In *Hunters in the Shallows: A History of the PT Boat*, American Military University graduate student Curtis L. Nelson offers only passing references to the movies and memoirs that inspired his personal interest in PT boats and, in general, this rich material is not pursued in the narrative.

In essence, *Hunters in the Shallows* is an eclectic chronology of events relating to the use of small fast-attack craft in the US Navy from approximately 1863 until 1945. With a short epilogue justifying the use of PT boats in World War II, the narrative abruptly ends without carrying the analysis further into the postwar era. While Nelson initially promises the reader an exploration of torpedo boats in American naval lore, *Hunters in the Shallows* fails to achieve this goal. Although Nelson is not necessarily responsible, according to the dust jacket blurb his work represents "the first book to examine the development and role of the small torpedo boat in U.S. naval history... a myth-buster Sure to be controversial." The aforementioned controversy is highly overstated. Instead of busting myths, Nelson only reaffirms traditional appraisals by recounting many well known stories about the daring wartime exploits of American naval figures such as Civil War hero William B. Cushing. Then, glossing over the next seventy-odd years of torpedo and small fast-attack boat development,

he rebuilds the narrative with brief vignettes about the familiar PT boat legends Bulkeley and Kennedy. Relying mainly on clichés to reach predictable and superficial conclusions, he has missed an opportunity to provide a balanced contemporary assessment of small fast-attack craft in American naval history and, more specifically, US Navy PT boat operations in World War II — subjects that are often overshadowed by other popular themes in recent naval literature.

Nelson's work is useful as a technical study examining the development of PT boats by the US Navy shortly before World War II. Citing corporate histories and official Navy documents from the National Archives and Records Administration Record Group 80, he attempts to bolster his examination of PT boats without fully developing an argument. Searching for a point, he uses a few primary documents to show that Navy leaders debated over the tactical value of organizing motor torpedo boat squadrons and funding PT boat construction. With highly limited cruising ranges and armament, many American naval planners were deeply concerned about the potential vulnerabilities of PT boats in battle. Readers may perhaps find Nelson's account of these high-level prewar debates interesting, yet I am left searching for more analysis and documentation beyond the limited amount of material cited from Record Group 80. Overall, *Hunters in the Shallows* suffers from a lack of focus and, as a result, the subjects Curtis Nelson offers in the narrative are virtually left unexamined.

DAVID KOHNEN
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MICHAEL GANNON, *Black May: The Epic Story of the Allies' Defeat of the German U-Boats in May 1943*. New York: Harper Collins, 1998. Bibliography, index, plates. ISBN 0-06-01789-1. \$30.00 US. \$43.50 Canada.

The Battle of the Atlantic was one of the most critical battles of World War II. In fact, it was no battle at all, but a six-year struggle between Allied and Axis forces for control of the sea lines

of communication. It was a constantly shifting struggle into which each of the opposing forces cast increasingly evolving resources. Everything was in flux: ships, equipment, training, technologies, and tactics. The Battle of the Atlantic has been thoroughly studied from a variety of perspectives. Its secondary literature provides very rich lore. Most historians are agreed that the year 1943 marked the turning point when the tide turned against any German hopes of victory at sea. It was a year that saw the convergence of forces and technological innovations which literally drove German submarines from the sea: centrimetric radar, Very Long-Range aircraft, Hedgehog ahead-throwing weapons, code cracking that permitted almost perfect control and diversion of otherwise vulnerable convoys, HF/DF "huff-duff" high frequency finding, escort screens according to mathematical principles, and deployment of escort carriers, to mention but a few. All of these coalesced with the enormous industrial power of the USA, which openly cast its lot with Allied forces after Pearl Harbor in December 1941.

May 1943, about which Gannon writes in such gripping detail, presents the dynamics in a nutshell. Germany's naval leader, Grand Admiral Karl Dönitz, was waging tonnage warfare. To be effective he had to sink more tons of shipping than the Allies' yards could replace, at least 600,000 tons per month. He also had to maintain an acceptable "exchange rate," sinking ships at a greater rate than he lost U-boats. His mission was now quite an impossible task. Strikingly, it was both contemporary German naval assessments in Berlin, and the official British Admiralty's Monthly Anti-Submarine Reports that gave Gannon the title for his book. While Admiralty's Report mused that "May was a very black month for the U-boats [because] sinkings of U-boats probably averaged one a day," the Germans drew similar conclusions. In the words of ace Ali Cremer, "the number of boats that failed to return

from patrol [that month] reached 41... and there was talk of 'Black May'."

Balancing the roles which the various Allied nations played in defeating the German navy is a complex task, but Gannon's treatment does suggest the view that the British and US navies were Germany's staunchest opponents. Traditionally deferential to British Imperial command was the "colonial" Royal Canadian Navy, which escorted fully fifty percent of the Atlantic convoys—and had done so since 1939. That the Canadians were absent at the very moment in 1943 when the tide turned against Germany was largely the result of the notorious "equipment failure" caused by a paternalistic Britain's steadfast refusal to share fully her best resources — HF/DF defection finding, for example — with the young Dominion's navy. Reading of the escort carrier USS *Bogue*'s "new British HF/DF set" is but one of many shameful reminders of the conditions under which Canada fought.

Michael Gannon's masterful and deeply textured account of May 1943 draws on archival and secondary documentation to set a dramatic stage and highlight the human dimensions of warfare at sea. He writes history with a novelist's flair, and has achieved his goal of putting "a human face on the story so that the reader was not confronted simply with steel, aluminum and high explosives..." (xii). His forte lies in portraying the crucible in which all the forces converged. Although the scholarship behind *Black May: The Epic Story of the Allies' Defeat of the German U-Boats in May 1943* may have uncovered no startling new truths, the narrative constitutes a major achievement that can be read with both insight and pleasure. He has breathed life into the documents of history.

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SHORTER NOTICES

SUSAN LAWRENCE AND MARK STANIFORTH, EDS., *The Archaeology of Whaling in Southern Australia and New Zealand*. Sydney: Australian Society for Historical Archaeology, PO Box 220, Holme Building, University of Sydney, NSW 1006 Australia, 1998. 115 pages, illustrations. Paper. ISBN 187-549-5223. \$35.00 (postage included from the above address).

Most of the fifteen papers in this collection were presented at a conference on Australian whaling archaeology at La Trobe University, Melbourne, in 1997. The contributors come from a wide variety of fields, and they offer many interesting insights into the important colonial industry in the first half of the nineteenth century. The papers are divided into three sections: regional overviews of whaling research (six selections); three case studies of shore whaling stations in South Australia, Victoria, and the Banks Peninsula; and six thematic studies, including such topics as shipping data, whaling seascapes, and whaling at the Australian National Museum. Each contribution is supplemented by a bibliography and interesting illustrations and maps. Altogether, although a fairly short work, this book is of interest to any student of maritime activities in Australian waters of the era, and essential for any comprehensive whaling library.

STUART M. FRANK, *More Scrimshaw Artists: A Sequel and Supplement to the Dictionary of Scrimshaw Artists*. Mystic, Ct.: Mystic Seaport Museum, 1998. xiii + 189 pages, illustrations, appendices, bibliography, index. ISBN 0-913372-82-X. \$45.00.

It was inevitable that Stuart Frank's comprehensive *Dictionary of Scrimshaw Artists* would warrant a supplement, if only because the original 1991 volume evoked much additional informa-

tion. This sequel adds some 160 entries and appendices, of which about one-quarter are updates and corrections, the rest new material. Various indices include a cumulative index of artists for both volumes, while the eight appendices discuss such topics as bartering whale ivory in the Pacific, commissioned fakes, and the like, and make available (appendix seven) the unpublished journal of scrimshander Charles H. Gurgin in Hudson Bay, 1864–1855 (pages 142–175). Any collection utilizing the first volume will find this sequel essential.

HARRIET CRAWFORD, *Dilmun and its Gulf Neighbours*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. xii + 170 pages, illustrations, maps, bibliography, index. ISBN 0-521-58348-9. \$59.95.

A quarter century ago archaeologist Geoffrey Bibby's semi-popular book *Looking for Dilmun* (1972) drew the attention of the non-specialist reading public to the role of Dilmun, a third and second millennium trading center somewhere in the Persian Gulf, which served as a middleman between societies as widely separated as Ur in Mesopotamia and Harappa in the Indus valley. In this clearly-written update, Harriet Crawford summarizes what has happened since to correct and amplify Bibby's work. The location of Dilmun is still unknown, probably since at least some of the time it referred to an area, not a city, including Bahrain, the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia, even Oman. Much more is now clear regarding the social evolution and trade links of the Gulf as Dilmun and her neighbors rose and fell from roughly 4000 BC to 1500 BC. This book is not a study in maritime history, but the trade was all maritime which brought to Dilmun copper from Oman, seals from Central Asia, lapis lazuli from Baluchistan, incised carnelian beads from

the Indus — all revealed by Mesopotamian cuneiform records and recent archaeological work. For that most ancient aspect of maritime commerce, this study is the place to begin.

GEORGE HAMILTON, *A Voyage Round the World in His Majesty's Frigate Pandora*. Sydney: Hordern House for the Australian National Maritime Museum (Australian Maritime Series, 4), 1998. 164 pages, illustrations. ISBN 1-875567-22-4.

George Hamilton was ship's surgeon on HMS *Pandora*, sent to seek out the *Bounty* mutineers in 1790, but equally famous for being wrecked on the Great Barrier Reef and for the arduous journey of her crew in open boats to Timor in the aftermath, reminiscent of Captain Bligh's own small boat voyage. It is a lively tale, first published in 1793 and now reprinted in a limited facsimile edition of 950 copies with a useful introductory essay by Peter Gesner, Curator of Maritime Archaeology at the Queensland Museum and expert on the *Pandora* site (artifacts from the *Pandora* are to be displayed in a new wing of the Museum of Tropical Queensland in Townsville). The work is well worth reading, and reprinting, and moreover is handsomely done with fine paper and an attractive binding. (Contact Hordern House, 77 Victoria Street, Sydney 2011 Australia.).

VICTORIA BREHM, ED., *"A Fully Accredited Ocean": Essays on the Great Lakes*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998. 249 pages, index of vessel names. ISBN 0-472-10709-7.

Eight chapters by as many experts in this volume have in common only their Great Lakes focus, but it is justification enough for publication. Subjects range from archaeology (K. Crisman on the 1812 brig *Jefferson*), to towing and ferries (E. S. Warner on towing with steam tugs; P. Trap on the Detroit & Milwaukee Folkes), and investment and technology (M. S. Salmon on investment in Canadian shipping, 1900–1914, W. Lafferty on the development of the self-unloader).

Two papers, finally, deal with fishing: H. Tolson on the fishing craft of Isle Royale, and T. Lloyd on "fishermen in court." Victoria Brehm contributes a useful introduction, and the volume is furnished with notes on contributors.

ANDREW HIGGINS AND JESSE SPALDING III, *World War II Adventures of Canada's Bluenose*. Newport Beach, Ca.: West Indies Trading, 1998. v + 192 pages, illustrations, index. ISBN 096-630-7305. Paper. \$25.00.

Andrew Higgins' father was one of an American group which purchased the famous Canadian schooner *Bluenose*. As many *Neptune* readers will know, the *Bluenose* was undefeated in international fishing boat races in the 1930s; not only was she featured on numerous Canadian stamps, but still sails today on that country's dime (and Nova Scotia license plates). Alas, she was not preserved in Canada; few Canadians had time to reflect on that fact in 1942. The *Bluenose*, launched in 1921, had a short life after the sale, mainly carrying cargo to and from Cuba. She was wrecked on a Haitian reef in 1946, a total loss. Higgins in this volume has collected various documents — mostly reproduced photographically — and pictures to illustrate her last years. Jesse Spalding III, who died in 1996, supplies an interesting chapter of his own memoirs of Cuba in the 1940s, complete with photos of "Papa" Hemingway, his boat the *Pilár*, La Bodeguita Del Medio and other watering holes, and so on. Altogether rather an eclectic volume, but it will at least answer all those who wonder whatever happened to the *Bluenose*. Order from Andrew Higgins at 1-(888)-972-7707.

AXEL NIESTLÉ, *German U-Boat Losses During World War II: Details of Destruction*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1998. viii + 305 pages, maps, appendices, bibliography, index. ISBN 155-750-6418. Hardcover. \$27.95.

German scholar Dr. Axel Niestlé has compiled a massive loss register of every U-boat of the Kriegsmarine between 1935 and 1945. Each

vessel is listed by type and hull number, providing such data as date of commissioning, commanding officer, and date, position, and cause of eventual loss. Various appendices list the disposition of each boat surviving the war and other statistical data, while indexes of persons, ships, and aircraft allow cross-referencing. Overall, an important work for reference collections and specialists in the submarine war.

ROBERT A. MAHER AND CAPTAIN JAMES E. WISE JR., *Sailor's Journey into War*. Kent, Ohio, and London: Kent State University Press, 1998. x + 207 pages, illustrations, bibliography, index. ISBN 0-87338-583-7. \$30.00.

Robert Maher was twenty-two when he joined the navy in 1940; he served during World War II on the elderly four-stack destroyer USS *Borie* (DD215), and in and out of the Panama Canal on convoy duty with the USS *Card* (CVE11) in the mid-Atlantic. In a famous night action north of the Azores, the *Borie* rammed and then fought it out at a point-blank range with German U-boat U-405. The sub went down, but the *Borie* had to be abandoned the next day. Maher, a gun-director pointer directly above the bridge, had a particularly clear view of the action. It is a lively, well-illustrated lower deck war memoir, but also, like so many, a coming-of-age story — in this case, of a young insurance clerk from Kearny, New Jersey.

SALLY SPEARS, *Call Sign Revlon: The Life and Death of Navy Fighter Pilot Kara Hultgreen*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1998. 306 pages, illustrations. ISBN 155-750-8097. \$27.95.

Kara Hultgreen was “aggressive, intelligent, athletic, and competitive” (page 194: words she used herself in an interview with NBC Nightly News). She was also outspoken, active politically in the cause of allowing women into Navy combat roles, and capable of making both enemies and friends with equal facility. The first fully qualified woman fleet fighter pilot, she was killed landing her Tomcat F-14A in 1994, trying to turn into a stalled left engine at under 450', virtually impossible for any pilot. Her story received much media attention at the time, including rumors that she had been pushed ahead too fast and too far simply because she was a woman. In fact, she was a good pilot, who had won the respect of her peers, flying a tough plane (thirty-two Tomcats crashed over a five-year period). There is not much salt air in this book, but it is a beautifully written tribute — not a hero-worshipping, but a tribute nonetheless — and in the process an important footnote to the story of women in the military. The reader can only wince at remarks on the mistakes made in earlier years by Kara's mother, a successful practicing attorney — for that mother is in fact the author, Sally Spears.

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